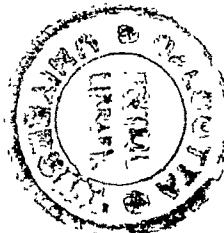


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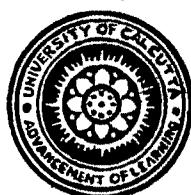
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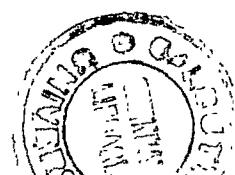
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## OURSELVES

Art is long and time is fleeting. May we be ever guided by

“Let your researches be so well established that if a man desires not merely to contemplate your work but even to try its accuracy with the most exacting tests of his own device, he shall be certain to find that facts are precisely what you have shown them to be. This will be an admirable precedent, and will encourage those who are at the helm of human society in the State, or of men’s consciousness in the church, to act in the same way, following indeed the example of the Apostles who did not fear to submit all their doctrines to the scrutiny and judgment of the world.”

*Via Lucis, Comenius*

## LENIN AS A SOCIOLOGIST

---

DEBKUMAR BANERJEE

Lefebvre has said that Marx is not a sociologist, but there is a sociology in Marx<sup>1</sup>. The same thing could be said of Lenin. It is doubtless that Lenin's writings are a rich storehouse of sociological findings and formulations, though Lenin is certainly not a sociologist in the sense in which we call Comte or Weber or Parsons a sociologist. He is not a sociologist in the narrow sense of the term. Neither has he written books on the sociology of this or that, nor has he abandoned his political role to devote his time and attention to academic sociological investigations. Lenin, however, does study society quite assiduously and meticulously, does analyse many social tendencies and processes, and does satisfactorily explain many problems vexing the social scientists of his day. And, let it be acknowledged in no uncertain terms, his achievements in these matters are most outstanding and enduring. If this be regarded as a sufficient claim to the title of a sociologist, then Lenin is, undoubtedly, a sociologist, a sociologist who carries Marx's sociological insights into newer fields of application, and, in some cases, to greater depths of analysis.

In the present paper, I propose to map out some of the fields of sociology in which Lenin has made significant contributions, and to indicate the nature of his contributions to those fields. There is, of course, hardly any field of social life which Lenin has not touched in his writings, but the fields in which he has made substantial contributions are sociology of economic life, political sociology, sociology of religion, sociology of knowledge, sociology of education, sociology of art and literature, and methodology of social science.

Before I take up Lenin's specific contributions to particular fields of sociology, I ought to emphasise the fact that Lenin is by far the

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About the author : Dr. Banerjee is a Reader in the Department of Sociology, Calcutta University.

most important propagator of Marx's sociological thought. Lenin is the first to use the word 'sociology' in describing Marx's study of society<sup>a</sup>, and to pinpoint the basic features of this new sociology. In "What 'The Friends of the People' are and How They Fight the Social Democrats" (1894), Lenin stresses the following cardinal points of Marx's sociology, and, consequently, of his own sociology as well. Firstly, the evolution of the economic formation of society is to be viewed as a process of natural history. This would be in sharp contrast to the 'subjective method in sociology' which treats the sphere of social phenomena as distinct from the sphere of phenomena of natural history. Secondly, a sociologist ought to talk of a particular society, like the capitalist society, instead of talking about society in general. A sociologist has to study a particular society as it is, instead of viewing society in general trying to realise the requirements of human nature in general. Thirdly, the economic sphere of social life has to be singled out from the various spheres ; the relations of production have to be singled out from all social relations. Because these relations of production are the basic and primary relations that determine all other relations. Subjective sociology, however, does not understand the primacy of the economic sphere or the relations of production. Lenin contends that the idea of materialism in sociology "for the first time created the possibility of a strictly scientific approach to historical and social problems"<sup>b</sup>, and that Marx elevated sociology from subjectivism to materialism, description to analysis, utopia to science. To quote Lenin, "Marx put an end to the view that society is a mechanical aggregation of individuals, which allows any kind of modification at the will of the powers that be ..... and which arises and changes in a fortuitous way ; he was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society, as the sum total of given relations of production and by establishing the fact that the development of these formations is a process of natural history"<sup>c</sup>.

Lenin's contributions to economic sociology are, by any standard, remarkably varied and substantial. He has analysed and made observations on the social relations involved in handicrafts, large scale industries, agriculture, trade and commerce, and so on. His "The Handicraft Census of 1894-1895 in Perm Gubernia and General

Problems of Handicraft Industry" (1897), "The Development of Capitalism in Russia" (1896-1899), "On the Question of Our Factory Statistics" (1898), "The Agricultural Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (1907), "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture" (1915), etc, bear testimony to his profound interest in and knowledge of economic facts and their social implications. Lenin's most distinctive contribution to economic sociology is, of course, his masterly analysis of the process of capitalist development in Russia, particularly the development of capitalism in Russian agriculture. Lenin's study of the development of capitalism in Russian agriculture is thoroughly sociological in as much as its main focus is on the evolving pattern of social relations in agriculture. What he presents is not merely a congeries of purely economic categories like the amount of capital invested, the quantity of crops produced, the rate of remuneration for agricultural work, etc. He deals mainly with feudal social relations, bourgeois social relations, etc, categories which are clearly sociological. Social science is yet to produce a study of the social structure of agriculture that is as thorough as Lenin's. Lenin makes a meticulous study of the most important sources and utilises European agrarian statistics to give Marxist agrarian theory a sound basis. He has verified, analysed and summed up a mass of statistical data, and has drawn up tables giving an insight into the deep-going causes, nature and social significance of economic processes, "Lenin's analysis of agrarian statistics shows their tremendous importance as a tool in cognising economic laws, exposing the contradictions of capitalism, and subjecting it and its apologists to scientific criticism"<sup>5</sup>. Neil Harding holds that "The Development of Capitalism in Russia" is the most important Lenin ever penned. According to him, "... 'The Development of Capitalism in Russia' remains the fullest, best documented and best argued examination of the crucial period of the evolution of capitalism out of feudalism in the literature of Marxism"<sup>6</sup>. Though it is debatable whether Lenin's study of capitalist development in Russia is the best among his numerous socio-economic and political studies, there is no doubt about its being one among the best from his pen. And, let it not be forgotten that the entire case about the possibility of a proletarian revolution in Russia was dependent on Lenin's thesis on the inroads made by capitalism in Russian agriculture apart from the palpable growth of capitalist industries in urban Russia.

No less significant are Lenin's contributions to political He does not merely reiterate the Marxist theory of the revolution, or merely repeat the Marxist propositions democracy, dictatorship, etc. He develops the Marxist to politics by extending it to areas not touched by Marx porating new historical experiences in his political exeges presenting his theory of imperialism which correctly ex changed political reality in the post-Marx period.

One particular political question to which Marx could adequate attention because of his pressing economic eng the question of nationalities. Lenin has examined this qu thoroughly in "The Right of Nations to self-determination". In this superb study of the national question, Lenin points "the striving to form a national state rests on deep foundations"<sup>7</sup>, and contends that "the typical, normal state capitalist period is the national state"<sup>8</sup>. Taking Marx's of the Irish question as his guide, Lenin probes different the national question in Tsarist Russia and puts the rig determination in its proper historical perspective.

Just as Lenin has correlated national movements economic requirements of a specific socio-economic formati similarly, treated all other political categories in their contexts, in the context of specific socio-economic formatio

Lenin has shown that the term 'democracy', which sheet anchor of western political sociology today, could be is, more an aid to political befuddle than political cle term, according to Lenin, can convey a precise meaning its specific class-content is explicitly stated. Thus stated, and dictatorship cease to be antonyms and become ways of looking at the same thing. The antique state, fo was essentially a dictatorship of the slave owners. But has noted, it did not abolish democracy *among* and *for* owners<sup>9</sup>. While unequivocally recognising the supe bourgeois democracy over feudal autocracy, Lenin exposes the halo and myth woven around bourgeois den bourgeois sociologists. "Bourgeois democracy, althoug historical advance in comparison with medievalism, alway

and under capitalism cannot but remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor"<sup>10</sup>. Political sociology needed and needs a constant reiteration of this plain truth about bourgeois democracy if it is not to stray into subjectivism.

Lenin has made a number of penetrating studies of political parties, such as "An Attempt at Classification of Political Parties in Russia" (1906), "Political Parties in Russia" (1912), "Fresh Data on German Political Parties" (1913), etc. There is often a hiatus between the professions and practices of a party, and an unwary social scientist may be deceived by the professions of a party into believing that the party is what it professes to be. Lenin has stressed, the need for guarding against such deception, and of studying "the real history of parties and not so much of what they say about themselves, but their *deeds*, how they go about solving various political problems, how they *behave* in matters involving the vital interests of the various classes of society : landlords, capitalists, peasants, workers, etc."<sup>11</sup> This is how Marx assessed the role of parties, and Lenin does the same in a new historical situation in the light of fresh data and contemporary developments. Lenin is also rightly credited with the detailed formulation of the principles of organisation of the communist party as the vanguard of the proletariat. The concept of the communist party as a well-disciplined, ideologically unified political organisation of the proletariat is largely Leninist in origin<sup>12</sup>. No sociological study of the communist parties and communist movements can be made without using and depending on at every step the Leninist concepts of democratic centralism, fight against revisionism, etc.

Lenin is an outstanding theorist of the proletarian revolution. He, of course, staunchly supports Marx's theoretical formulations about the revolutionary process, but he has made positive contributions to the subject by applying Marx's theory of revolution in the concrete historical situation of Russia. His incisive and insightful observations on the revolutionary process are products of his personal involvement and active participation in that process, and therein lies their unique importance in political sociology. Lenin's knowledge of the dynamics of revolution is based on what in modern sociological

jargon is called 'participant observation', while all that Sorokin, Brinton, Gottschalk, Parsons, etc say about revolution are based on official documents and newspaper reports, or, at best, seeing a revolutionary upheaval from a distance. That explains, partly, the difference between Lenin's sociology of revolution and the bourgeois sociology of revolution. In one, theory is enriched by practice ; in the other, theory, detached from practice, weaves subjective patterns which distort and misrepresent the objective reality.

If we want to acquaint ourselves with the unfolding of the revolutionary process, the sequences of its development, the diverse effects it produces on different classes, the waxing and waning of the revolutionary tide, the prospects and problems generated by the revolution, and the like, Lenin's writings on revolution would be an essential reading for us. In most writings of Lenin the theme of revolution is the running thread, but among these "The Lessons of the Moscow Uprising" (1906), "The Lessons of the Revolution" (1910), "Lessons of the Revolution" (1917), "Marxism and Insurrection" (1917), etc, deserve special mention as immensely valuable sources for the sociology of revolution.

"Every revolution means", according to Lenin, "a sharp turn in the lives of vast masses of people", and "During a revolution millions and tens of millions of people learn in a week more than they do in a year of ordinary, somnolent life"<sup>18</sup>. Lenin describes revolutions as "the festivals of the oppressed and the exploited", and observes, "At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order as at a time of revolution"<sup>19</sup>. Every revolution has its destructive and constructive phases. During the first phase of the revolution, the destructive, violent phase, the masses must know that "they are entering an armed, bloody and desperate struggle" and "contempt for death must become widespread among the masses and ensure victory". During this phase, Lenin tells us, "attack and not defence must become the slogan of the masses ; the ruthless extermination of the enemy will be their task"<sup>20</sup>. And when the destructive phase is over, the proletariat has captured power, and the constructive phase of the revolution has begun, the task of the revolutionaries become quite different from what it was during the earlier phase, Now, the proletariat has "to blow up as many of the

old institutions as possible", to clear away the "fragments of the old", and to concentrate on "the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system which are growing among the wreckage....."<sup>16</sup>. Lenin could, indeed, win an immortal place in sociology for his masterly analysis of the nature and stages of the revolutionary process even if he contributed nothing else to sociological literature.

Another major contribution of Lenin of political sociology is his theory of imperialism, and what follows from it, his sociology of war. By demonstrating that imperialism is the culmination of capitalism and that imperialism is the basic cause of war, Lenin has broken a new ground in the sociology of war. Attempts to explain the occurrence of wars in terms of hypothetical psychological propensities and national ambitions could not furnish a firm basis for the study of war between nations. Such explanations would beg the question—what lies at the root of such propensities and ambitions? Why do not such tendencies and inclinations assert themselves in all circumstances but become manifest only in definite historical contexts? Lenin's exegesis of the phenomenon of imperialism has enriched sociology by furnishing a verifiable objective answer to such vexed questions. It is the dire need of desperate monopoly capitalism that breeds such psychological attitudes and foments such aggressive ambitions. Instead of adopting a subjective attitude to war, Lenin adopts the truly sociological, that is, scientific, attitude. And the hall mark of this attitude is fidelity to facts. What Lenin says of the First World War is worth quoting in this connection. Lenin says, "Proof of what was the true social, or rather, the true class character of the War is naturally to be found, not in the diplomatic history of the war, but in analysis of the *objective* position of one ruling classes in *all* belligerent countries." "In order to depict this objective position," he adds, "one must not take examples or isolated data (in view of the complexity of the phenomena of social life, it is always possible to select any number of examples or separate data to prove any proposition), but the *whole* of the data concerning the *basis* of economic life in *all* the belligerent countries and the *whole* world"<sup>17</sup>.

Lenin has made no mean contribution to the sociology of religion. In his "Socialism and Religion" (1905), "The Attitude of

the Workers' Party to Religion" (1909), "Classes and Parties in Their Attitude to Religion and Churches" (1909), etc, Lenin has reiterated Marx's concept of religion as the opium of the people. Lenin, like Marx, regards "economic slavery as the true source of religious humbugging of mankind". In his view, "Religion is a short of spiritual booze in which the slaves of Capital drown their human image, their demand for a life more or less worthy of man"<sup>18</sup>. "All modern religions and churches and all religious organisations", Lenin points out, act as "instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to drug the working class"<sup>19</sup>. It is no wonder that the ruling bourgeoisie, all over the world, "devotes to the support of religion hundreds of millions of rubles from the profits squeezed out of the working people"<sup>20</sup>. Lenin has repeatedly exposed the reactionary role of religion and has drawn the attention of the workers and the intellectuals to the need for "untiring atheist propaganda and an untiring atheist fight" to rouse the masses "from their religious torpor"<sup>21</sup>. The only notable difference between Marx's treatment of religion and Lenin's, it seems, is this that while Marx, particularly in his early writings, had seen religion as a very pronounced form of human alienation, Lenin, unacquainted as he is with Marx's early writings, does not bring in the concept of alienation in his explanation of the religious phenomena.

Lenin's contribution to the sociology of knowledge also deserves mention. In this matter he has strictly followed Marx's view on the genesis of human ideas and the relation between consciousness and being. Refuting Mach's erroneous theory that not things but sensations are the real elements of the world, Lenin affirms that "Materialism, in full agreement with natural science, takes matter as primary and regards consciousness, thought, sensation as secondary, because in its well-defined form sensation is associated only with the higher forms of matter (organic matter), while 'in the foundation of the structure of matter' one can only surmise the existence of a faculty akin to sensation"<sup>22</sup>. Again, criticising Bogdanov's theory of the identity of social being and social consciousness, Lenin presents the materialist position on the question thus—"Materialism in general recognises objectively real being (matter) as independent of consciousness, sensation, experience, etc., of humanity. Historical

materialism recognises social being as independent of the social consciousness of humanity. In both cases consciousness is only the reflection of being, at best an approximately true (adequate, perfectly exact) reflection of it"<sup>23</sup>.

Lenin has not made any systematic or thorough study of education as a social institution. But in a few of his writings, such as "The question of Ministry of Education Policy" (1913), "The tasks of the Youth Leagues" (1920), etc., he has examined the nature and role of education in pre-revolution and post-revolution Russia, and has formulated the guide lines for a socialist system of education. In Tsarist Russia, Lenin tells us, the younger generation of workers and peasants in bourgeois schools "were not so much educated as drilled in the interests of the bourgeoisie. They were trained in such a way as to be useful servants of the bourgeoisie, able to create profits for it without disturbing its peace and leisure"<sup>24</sup>. The bourgeois schools "provided purely book knowledge", compelled the pupils "to assimilate the mass of useless, superfluous and barren knowledge which cluttered up the brain and turned the younger generation into bureaucrats regimented according to a single pattern"<sup>25</sup>. Needless to say, such a system of education would be of no use in a socialist state. A socialist state would have to recast the education system to meet its social, economic and political requirements. And this recasting of the education system poses a series of pertinent questions about what to learn, how to learn, what to take from the old system, and so on. Lenin naturally devotes his attention to such questions, and his answers can be summed up in the form of three basic propositions : first, what was bad in the old system has to be rejected, but what was good should be adopted for the benefit of socialism ; second acquiring knowledge is important, but more important is its assimilation ; third, every step in the study and training should be linked up with the continuous struggle of the proletariat for the building up of a socialist society.

Lenin has not written much on art and literature, but whatever little he has written on these subjects is illumined by his refined aesthetic sense and his remarkable grasp of the social role of these media of human expression. In Lenin's view. "Art belongs to the people. Its roots should be deeply implanted in the very thick of

the labouring masses. It must unite and elevate their feelings, thoughts, and will"<sup>26</sup>. Art will serve, to quote Lenin, "not some satiated heroine, not the bored 'upper ten thousand' suffering from fatty degeneration, but millions and tens of millions of working people—the flower of the country, its strength and its future"<sup>27</sup>. As in the case of education, in the case of art and literature also, Lenin is opposed to a rejection of everything that is old. He holds that "The beautiful must be preserved, taken as an example, as the point of departure, even if it is old"<sup>28</sup>.

Lenin's contribution to the methodology of social science consists in his elucidation of historical materialism and his application of this method in the study of diverse social phenomena. Marx had used the historical materialist method in all his studies, but he had nowhere given a detailed description of his method. The task of explaining the method, therefore, fell on the shoulders of his followers, and Lenin, as one of them, has accomplished that task quite ably and amply. "The categorical demand of Marxist theory in examining any social question", according to Lenin, "is that the question be examined within *definite* historical limits". And "if it refers to a particular country (e.g. the national program for a given country), that due account be taken of the specific features that distinguish that country from others within the same historical epoch"<sup>29</sup>. In his "Plans for a Pamphlet—Statistics and Sociology", in course of discussing the significance of national movements, Lenin stresses some important methodological points. He criticises the prevalent discussions on the subject for "lack of concreteness and historical perspective". He says that "The most widely used, and most fallacious method in the realm of social phenomena is to tear out *individual* minor facts and juggle with examples. Selecting chance examples presents no difficulty at all, but is of no value, or of purely negative value, for in each individual case everything hinges on the historically concrete situation"<sup>30</sup>. Many modern sociologists continue to use such a fallacious method, and their writings display "lack of concreteness and historical perspective". Lenin's criticism of studying "individual minor facts" detached from their historical context and of "juggling with examples", needs to be heeded by modern sociologists if sociology is to be prevented from degenerating into a pseudo-science. Social scientists, in Lenin's

opinion, should study social facts in their totality. As Lenin puts it, "Facts, if we take them in their *entirety*, in their *inter-connection*, are not only stubborn things, but undoubtedly proof-bearing things". And "We must seek to build a reliable foundation of precise and in disputable facts .... And if it is to be a real foundation, we must take not individual facts, but the *sum total* of facts, without a *single* exception, relating to the question under discussion"<sup>81</sup>. Lenin's elucidation of historical materialism, the real and reliable methodological foundation of social science, undoubtedly constitutes one of his major contributions to sociology.

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## SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

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SUKUMAR BOSE

Social scientists of contemporary schools often confront a question : whether sociology and psychology can be treated as two separate disciplines, in terms of discrete analytic foci ? There is no doubt that these two are cognate disciplines centering around a common aim — human welfare ; and centering around a common approach — interaction analysis. Yet, it would not be difficult to meet social scientists who claim independent identities in terms of their respective assignments, training and profession. But an overview of the teaching subjects and research problems of applied psychologists doing with 'group life and its dynamics' clearly reveal that their subjectmatter is basically a 'social system' affair ; while applied sociologists, as teachers or researchers, doing with the 'dynamics of deviancy' with special reference to personality maladjustments deal undoubtedly with the 'personal system' affair. For example, think of both sociologists and psychologists racking their respective brains to utilise the fruits of their respective disciplines for social service or human welfare in order to counteract 'victimization'. Here both of them may be found equally interested the etiology and consequences of 'social stigmatisation' — by probing the 'social stigma' as a societal force and, as well, by studying the impact of the said 'social stigma' on the victim. In this case, at least, for attaining their respective professional objectives they may be found encroaching into one another's so-called separate academic jurisdictions and join hands by sharing views and feelings for the cause of preventing victimization and promoting scope for the rehabilitation of the victims in social life with due dignity. Obviously, one may not hesitate here to crash the caste-and-creed barrier of these two groups of professionals for greater interest and for man's or society's sake.

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After the rationale stated above, it would not be irrelevant to contradict the conventional practice of defining a discipline in the manner which is followed by those who by merely accepting the label of a discipline do. Is it not more scientific to define a discipline, here, in terms of the 'problem construct' or 'object of study' and the scientific method that has to be adopted for probing and solution aptly? If this practice is followed then many who are by profession sociologists will find themselves as psychologists and vice versa, by crossing the boundaries of textbooks, research journals and professional societies and by overcoming certain professional stereotypes. From applied social science viewpoints, psychology and sociology bear a similarity due to the fact that both *person* and *society* are conceived of as systems of actions—societal or individual.

Sometimes the said apparent similarity or actual overlappings arouse great confusion. One may question, whether these two academic disciplines can be reduced to one or merged one with the other? The answer is straightway 'no'. It is not possible to arrive at any general principle or formulation encompassing both. Any such attempt would be incorrect and misleading. As 'social norms' exist so also "individual cognitive field" or "psychological field" exists. Academicians can not deny the separate existence of these two and their typical features. Similarly, applied scientists can not deny that in any expression of human behaviour in the modern civilised life both "social norms" and "psychological field" remain interwoven in a *dyadic scheme*, as inseparable component structures. The above mentioned fact has stressed upon the necessity of interdisciplinary give and take and contributed to the current definition, trends of research, and growth of a comparatively new interdiscipline entitle 'applied social psychology'. It is an integral part of psychology, an extension for application of psychological findings for social service and human welfare; while its characterisation indicates that its specialization is rooted in sociology. This growing field owes much to progressive thinkers like Miller and Dollard (1941) and Stern, Stein, and Bloom (1956).

The said comparatively new interdiscipline refers to the "scientific study of the experience and behaviour of individuals in relation to social-stimulus situations" (Sherif and Sherif, 1956). It clearly speaks of a direction of influences linking individual and social setting under

reciprocal relationships. Sociologists like Durkheim (1938), Thomas (1918), and Mead (1934) were found groping in this direction, each in his way. The said social-stimulus situations may be described (a) in relation to other people, viz., other individuals, groups, and collective interaction situations; and (b) in relation to cultural products, viz., material culture and nonmaterial culture. A more extensive discussion of each variety of above social-stimulus situations have been made by Sherif and Sherif (1956).

Applied social psychology, as an interdiscipline subject, owes much to the scientific contributions of some reputed humanist scientists — particularly to their hints and suggestions in overcoming certain gaps and limitations in drawing up conclusive comments. A very bright illustration of such fact is Emile Durkheim's investigation on the etiology of "suicide" (Durkheim, 1951), a classic of sociological research. With best of loyalty to his own discipline, sociology, Durkheim finally found it necessary to refer human psychology in order to answer the question : How can suicide have such an origin ? Man's psychological constitution, he said, "needs an object transcending it". Without the scope of that transcendence in stages of confusion, he said, under extreme dejection and discouragement man may take a "desperate resolution". "If life is not worth the trouble of being lived, everything becomes a pretext to rid ourselves of it". He greatly underplayed the meditating role of the individual who responds to the conditions and commits the act. He ignored the *psychic situation* of the suicide, for which a theory of personality is to be referred. Durkheim wrote *Suicide* before 1900, before Freud and Cooley. About sixty years after Durkheim, Henry and Short (1954) in their book *Suicide and Homicide* utilised an explicit psychodynamic theory of suicide and homicide — as acts of aggression internalised and externalised respectively. "Whatever its brilliance, Durkheim's analysis suffered from his failure to give a more systematic role to knowledge about the personalities common in the groups he studied" (Inkeles, 1963).

In the early part of the twentieth century, Freud presented his theory of personality formation and functioning. His psychology was mainly involved with man's basic drives and their restraint. The *Unconscious*, as a construct, of Freudian personality theory though had no compelling interest to the followers of sociologism, yet that was



well-received and accommodated in the works of Charles Cooley (1902) and G. H. Mead (1934). "The modest direct influence of Freud harks back to the old controversy between psychologism and sociologism with which Durkheim was so involved" (Inkeles, 1963). Gradually the need for using an explicit and adequate theory of personality for explaining the background human factors in the "rate" affairs of sociological analysis has been focussed and recognised — through the works of Henry Murray (1938) and E. Erikson (1950). As a result, the sociologists' S-R proposition to explain state-rate theory seems inadequate to a good many researchers doing with social welfare and social work programme, pending incorporation of a new element in the said proposition, the P, to signify the 'action propensity of the human personality'. Thus the researchers in both disciplines, sociology and psychology, jointly agree to work in a new interdiscipline, applied social psychology, with a modified S-P-R proposition. According to this proposition, each socially aberrated behaviours(S) is conceived as bearing an intervening personality element (P) in causing the magnitude or social problem rate (R). For example, in the field of criminological studies, applied social psychologists are interested to know: Does the child learn from peers and older delinquents to be predisposed to delinquency, or does he carry the predisposition with him in the form of an "estranged morality" and merely learn the techniques and earn the support he wants for the course he already prefers?—while doing with a preventive programme in controlling juvenile delinquency as a genuine social problem in a country. A very clear picture of modern perspective of the said interdiscipline has been delineated and depicted by Lindgren and Harvey (1981).

In brief, this interdiscipline field of social science is out and out work-centered and where both sociology and psychology can be found to coexist without losing respective uniqueness ; and where the academic jackets of the professionals play a very insignificant role.

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## KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY IN HINDU SOCIETY— AN ANALYSIS OF G. S. GHURYE'S THEORY

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SWAPAN KUMAR PRAMANICK

### I

To students of Indian sociology, G. S. Ghurye needs no introduction. Of all the founding fathers of Indian sociology, Ghurye's influence has been most constructive and enduring. Since the very beginning of the growth of sociology as an academic discipline in India, Ghurye was associated with the Department of sociology, Bombay University. And the Department was at the forefront of sociological research in India. During his long period of association with this Department—from 1924 to 1959—Ghurye organised and directed the course of sociological research in India. He created an intellectual milieu, a sociological awareness in which 'writing a paper or a book came to be looked upon as a very natural thing to do for all research-students and staff-members'. (S. D. Pillai : 1976 : 28). He was largely responsible for building up an empirical tradition in Indian sociology. He continuously sensitized others about the need of doing research. Some of his successful students have become household names in the world of sociology. The names of his students which come to one's mind in this connection are M. N. Srinivas, K. M. Kapadia, I. Karve, K. T. Merchant, I. P. Desai, A. R. Desai, M. S. A. Rao, Y. B. Damle and many others. Thanks to the many-sided interests of Ghurye, his students have excelled in various fields of sociology and this has made it possible for Indian sociology to grow very rapidly in post-independent India.

Ghurye's own research-interests are as diverse as those of his students. We present here Ghurye's views on the significance of kinship terminology in Hindu society. There are two reasons why

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this aspect of Ghurye's writings is important for understanding Ghurye. First, it will enable us to understand how Ghurye followed a historical-evolutionary approach in his own writings. Ghurye believed that past social history enables us to understand its present-day organization. He was of the opinion that the functional approach is wrong because it begins at the wrong end. One cannot understand the present without reference to the past. Functionalism gives too much importance on the present and ignores the relevance of historical evolution. In the sphere of kinship, Ghurye has shown how the development of kinship terminology is linked with the evolution of social structure in India and he shows how a sociologist, endeavouring to know the past social organization, should proceed in the matter. Second, in his discussions on family and kinship, Ghurye found it most convenient to combine his intellectual borrowings from the West with his legacy from the East, i.e., his vast knowledge in the field of Indology and classical literature. The manner in which he has combined the data from classical literature, ethnological details and his knowledge on the kinship systems in different civilizations in his discussion on family and kinship is something without parallel.

## II

Ghurye's interest in the field of kinship dates back to the early days of his acquaintance with W. H. R. Rivers and G. E. Smith and their classic studies on kinship. The influence of Rivers was more profound than that of others. It was as a result of this that Ghurye became interested in the analysis of the significance of kinship in Hindu society. This is discernible from his various writings on kinship published from time to time. As Ghurye said, "my interest in kinship systems and terminologies has been rather old and I have been following it up from time to time" (Ghurye : 1969 : 339).

Thanks to the endeavour of sociologists and social anthropologists today, there is now a surfeit of literature on kinship systems (see, Lila Dube : 1974). Yet there are plenty of gaps in this area of research. Ghurye pointed out this lacuna while inaugurating a conference of Sociologists in Bombay in 1967 and suggested that an authentic survey of kinship terminologies in different parts of India

should be made. This, according to him, would facilitate comparative and analytical studies of kinship. This was a very important and timely suggestion on the part of Ghurye.

In order to locate Ghurye's position in the sphere of kinship literature, it is necessary to get an idea of the whole debate on kinship studies in anthropological literature. Milton Singer has described it as the Cultural VS Structural explanations of kinship systems (M. Singer : 1968 : 534).

The systematic study of kinship in Anthropology began with Morgan. Kinship terminologies, according to Morgan, reveal stages of human evolution and they are indicators of the type of social structure. By a scientific analysis of these terminologies, social reconstruction, i.e., getting an idea of the previous state of society, is possible. Morgan grouped kinship terminologies into two major systems, classificatory and descriptive. Whereas the classificatory system merged lineal with collateral relatives, in the descriptive system, lineal relatives are isolated in the terminology. Rivers noted that no discovery in the whole range of science can more certainly be credited to one man than the discovery of the classificatory system of relationship to Morgan. (Rivers : 1914 : 4).

But Kroeber regarded this distinction as misleading. He suggested that kinship terminology should be studied in terms of psychological principles, because "terms of kinship reflect psychology, not sociology" (A. L. Kroeber : 1909 : 77-84). Hence, reconstruction of social institutions and forms of marriage from kinship terms is not proper. The correspondence between the two is determined by specific cultural pattern. That is why, Kroeber's approach may be regarded as the cultural one towards kinship.

Rivers did not accept Kroeber's position and he substantiated Morgan's basic premises with regard to kinship. He was of the opinion that kinship terminology is rigorously determined by social conditions and particularly by forms of marriage. As such, they can be used for historical reconstruction.

Radcliffe-Brown agreed with Rivers that social institutions including forms of marriage are regularly connected with kinship terminologies. However, as Singer says, he did not accept Rivers'

causal analysis of the connections or their use for historical reconstructions. To Radcliffe-Brown, kin terms and social institutions are related not as cause and effect but as component and interdependent parts of a structural system (Milton Singer : 1968 : 535). This approach may, therefore, be termed as structural approach.

Lowie has also made some original contributions in the sphere of kinship analysis. He admitted the influence of both Rivers and Kroeber upon him. He also showed a high degree of correlation between a clan organization and a bifurcate merging type of kin-terminology. But Ghurye says that Lowie's scheme is logically and sequentially defective. Ghurye also criticises Malinowski's and Radcliffe-Brown's schemes and remarks, "the departure (from Morgan's and Rivers' scheme) made by Malinowski modified and correlated by Radcliffe-Brown to some extent, has proved sterile" (G. S. Ghurye : 1963 : 23).

Ghurye thinks that kinship terms help us to identify the social obligations and duties of an individual towards others in society. He says, "since Rivers wrote on kinship, whatever the classification of kin-nomenclature, the end has been to discover connection between a particular type of kin-nomenclature and facts of social structure and life" (Ghurye : 1963 : 33). Kinship structure may fundamentally be divided into two categories : consanguineal and affinal. The fundamental elements of a social structure are derived from these principles. Family, Kindred and Clan are the three important groups which are based on them. The family is the most important group in society and the relational pattern within the family is fundamental for understanding society. "How they are treated in kinship nomenclature is, therefore, the most significant fact". (Ghurye : 1955 : 7). The concept of Kindred is also essentially a social one and as such it is to be distinguished from such biological grouping as descent. (J. E. Goldthrope : 1968 : 65-75). Ghurye thinks that the term Kindred implies both kin-connections and social obligations and it is also an important category of social grouping in Hindu society (Ghurye : 1963 : 37). Similarly, the gotra organization in Hindu society has provided a unifying element and a large part of the behavioural pattern of the Hindus is to be explained with reference to it.

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In the debate on the relationship between kinship terminology and social structure, Ghurye has sided with Morgan and Rivers. Though he suggests slight modifications in their theories, these are not of a fundamental nature. In fact, Ghurye's book *Family and Kin in Indo-European Culture* has proved to be a major substantiation of Rivers' theory that kinship study is the principal method of social reconstruction. As Ghurye says, "In 'Family and Kin', I have attempted to use both the terminological and behavioural data about kin among many of the peoples of Indo-European speech in order to focus them on the elucidation of the history of the institution of family." (Ghurye : 1955 : IV).

It is impossible to give even a broad idea of the depth of erudition and the extent of cross-cultural linguistic knowledge that Ghurye has shown in the above mentioned work. Prof. G. C. Homans, in his Review of this book of Ghurye in *The American Journal of Sociology* (1958) says, "the effective study of Indo-European kinship requires a thorough command not only of the linguistics and history of a variety of peoples but also of comparative kinship in non-Indo-European cultures. ...Prof. Ghurye's is a heroic attempt to resolve the dilemma". (S. D. Pillai : 1976 : 32-33). In India, there was hardly, if ever, any sociologist who would undertake a cross-cultural study of this dimension. The work is an attempt to study the family structure of the various groups of people belonging to Indo-European culture on the basis of linguistic usages prevalent among them. These people had a common past and a common linguistic background. Subsequently, they dispersed for various reasons. (Ghurye : 1969 : 163). Ghurye studies the linguistic usages for kinship terms of these people to see whether some uniformity in family structure can be deduced from such common cultural past.

By making a comprehensive study of the kinship terms of the people belonging to Indo-European, Greek and Latin cultures, Ghurye concludes that "the family organization in primitive Indo-European culture was of an extended type in structure and bi-lineal in kin-affiliation .... The Indo-European family, was, in all probability, a unit comprising four generations" (Ghurye : 1955 : 39). Ghurye also contests Morgan's theory that matrilineal and mother-right

type of family was the pristine form of social organization. As he says, "the position of the husband and the father suggested by the widely current terms for these relatives is not compatible with a matrilineal organization. We conclude, therefore, that the primitive Indo-European organization was patrilineal" (Ghurye : 1955 : 26-27). While all the successive branches of this Indo-European culture maintained this type of family organization, in the case of the Anglo-saxons, it proved to be somewhat different. They had no specific term beyond the father. It can be inferred from this that the family in Anglo-saxon society was the nuclear one where the father formed the archetype for the nomenclature of further descendants. Ghurye shows that the nuclearity of family structure among them is not a modern phenomenon. Prof. Edmondson remarks, this view 'deserves circulation among sociologists inclined to attribute the nuclearity of the American family to the Industrial revolution' (M. S. Edmondson : 1958 : 568).

Ghurye is also critical about Engels' view on the primacy of the economic factor in the origin and development of the family. The economic factor cannot be the sole or even the principal factor in the determination of kinship structure. It cannot explain, for example, why self-acquired property was looked upon as the property of the earner by the Greeks whereas it was thought to belong to the coparcenary among the Indo-Aryans (Ghurye : 1955 : 214). Familial organizations, Ghurye declared, are attuned more to 'ideas and beliefs of a non-economic nature'.

Kinship terms are not only the indicators of an earlier type of social organization, the evolution of the same can also be understood with reference to changes in kin-terminology. Ghurye attempts to make a cultural history by an analysis of the evolution of these terms. For example, the two words *Patni* and *Bahu*, which were used at successive periods of Hindu society, indicate that from the mistress of the house (*Patni*) the wife was later converted into a mere bride (*Bahu*) having no authority over family affairs (Ghurye : 1955 : 20). Ghurye also strongly denies any suggestion that Indo-Aryan kinship languages had any Dravidian ancestry. On the other hand, on the basis of cross-cultural linguistic analysis, he convincingly shows that they originated from Indo-European source. This linguistic affinity is shared by all the groups belonging to the

Indo-European family. The same linguistic and cultural traits are "spread from Lithuania on the Baltic in the north to the river Godavari in the South, from Scotland in the North-West to the mouths of the river Mahanadi in the south-east and from Ireland in the west to Chinese Turkestan on the one hand and Assam on the other in the east." (Ghurye : 1979 : 2). Much of the social-structural and cultural similarities of these people can be explained in terms of their common past. It is to this task that Ghurye has addressed himself as a sociologist.

Ghurye also attempts to analyse the evolution of family organization in ancient and medieval India with reference to contemporary changes in kinship terminology. There occurred a change in the idea of joint family as the four-generation family was subsequently converted into three generation family. Ghurye shows how this change was related to rules regulating ancestor-worship, sapinda rules, gotra and pravara exogamy, rules relating to inheritance and the like. He shows how the rules of inheritance framed by Jimutvahana on the one hand and Vijnaneshwara on the other, supported respectively joint and nuclear types of family (Ghurye : 1955 : 89). Thus Ghurye avers the tremendous importance of kinship terminology in the understanding of social structure. The close relationship between the two leads him to conclude, "History of kinship functions and of familial organization is in harmony with the deductions about them which are derivable from the terminologies" (Ghurye : 1955 : 89).

### III

Ghurye's deep interest in kinship in Hindu society prompted him to make some highly original contributions to the structure and evolution of Hindu kinship and its relation with other aspects of society. Here is a field where Ghurye has drawn a bold hyphen between Indology and sociology. He attempts to show how the various institutions and practices relating to kinship have provided the thread of unity among the Hindus. Ghurye's discussions on the importance of kinship in Hindu society are to be found in various works of him (see, Ghurye : 1955, 1957, 1969, 1972, 1977). Broadly speaking, he is concerned with kinship as an institution regulating marriage in Hindu society. This leads him to discuss (1) the relation

between caste and kinship ; (2) the origin, development and significance of the 'Brahmanical' institutions of Gotra, 'Charana' and 'Pravara' in Hindu society and (3) the operation of Sapinda exogamy.

The relationship between caste and kinship is very close because, firstly, caste exogamy in our society is largely based on kinship bonds, either real or imaginary and secondly, the effective unit of caste, the sub-caste, largely consists of kinsmen.

As caste is an institution the essence of which is to be found in marriage restrictions (Ghurye : 1969 : 20), and as rules relating to exogamy are linked with kinship, caste and kinship are closely related with each other. Ghurye says that there are two types of exogamy in Hindu society, viz., 1) sept or gotra exogamy and 2) prohibited degrees of kin or sapinda exogamy. The Gotra exogamy may be of the Brahmanic type or of the non-Brahmanic type. That which is followed by most castes is largely a mixture of the two. But the Brahmanic Gotra organization is most important and even the non-Brahmanic system cannot be understood without reference to it. Ghurye holds that the Brahmanical pattern of gotra organization was gradually dovetailed into the Hindu social system. This has become possible because of the immense social and political power of the Brahmins.

Regarding the origin of this Gotra exogamy, it may be said that the vedic Aryans, when they came into India, had neither any gotra organization nor any other tradition of group exogamy among them. The Indo-Aryans came in India with the cultural trait of family exogamy (Ghurye : 1955 : 206-14). Brahmanic exogamy in India was the result of a complex pattern of interaction between various elements, e.g., their earlier system of family-exogamy, the cult of the manes, the urge to maintain family geneaology and the like (Ghurye : 1972 : 308-9). Ghurye strongly refuses any suggestion that gotra-exogamy developed as a result of the Aryans coming into contact with the non-aryan indigenous people who followed some sort of group exogamy. But some other influences also worked in the origin of the institution. The vedic aryans' knowledge of astronomy and cosmography which they gained in India also, according to Ghurye, helped in its origin (see, Pillai : 1976 : 39).



Historically, gotra as a kin-unit was fully recognized by 800 B.C. Around 500 B.C. sexual relation with a women of one's own gotra began to be treated as heinous. Rules relating to 'pravara' exogamy began to crystallize around this period. Thereby the most complex type of exogamy in Hindu society based on gotra-pravara began to take shape. Ghurye says that at about 400 B.C. there developed about nine hundred exogamous gotras and these were ultimately grouped into eight super-gotras which were all exogamous (Ghurye : 1969 : 254-55). Restrictions based on pravara identification and Sapinda rules further complicated the situation and resulted in detailed regulations with regard to the choice of the marital partner.

It is true that this general rule of association of gotra-exogamy with Pravara and Sapinda exogamy is not prevalent in all the parts of India. T. N. Madan shows that the Kashmiri Brahmins do not apply the pravara principle (T. N. Madan : 1962 : 59-77). But Ghurye holds that, by and large, the gotra restictions continue even today inspite of the enforcement of the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, legalizing marriage within the gotra. "The sentiment against marrying within one's gotra has remained almost as strong as it was a thousand years ago ... such is the power of sacrosanct rules in this non-rational and sentimental Brahmanic society" (Ghurye : 1972 : 310).

Ghurye discusses the effects of gotra organization from the eugenic standpoint. Though such artificial groupings as gotra are not desirable, Ghurye holds that its persistence must have resulted in random distribution of genetic factors over a wide circle (Ghurye : 1938 : 22-23). Otherwise, caste based groups would have been further fragmented into extremely local and narrow units. This would have helped in the process of progressive disintegration of Hindu society. This, according to Ghurye, is the societal function of exogamy-based kinship (Ghurye : 1969 : 263).

Thus an individual strengthens the bond of social unity when he is constrained to go out of a particular circle for the purpose of marriage. Kinship regulations relating to hypergamy, exogamy and prohibited circle — all have a combined effect of intensifying the regional and territorial integration of caste and sub-caste and ultimately of Hindu society. This is how, according to Ghurye,

rules relating to exogamy strengthen the bond of unity in Hindu society. The Brahmanical contribution in the process, Ghurye thinks, is most profound as the Brahmanical practices relating to exogamy were ultimately accepted by other sections. Family and kinship structures are the most important aspects of social structure. And in these two aspects Brahmanical institutions and practices have been emulated by other sections in Hindu society. The Brahmins have thus played a leading and indispensable role in maintaining social unity among the Hindus.

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## THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF EDUCATIONAL BACKWARDNESS IN A WEST BENGAL VILLAGE

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KRISHNA CHAKRABORTTY

### I

Assuming that mass education is one of the first and fundamental conditions for effecting development to which goal "wastage" and "stagnation"<sup>1</sup> in education pose two serious hindrances, in the present venture some of the conditions which drag the expansion of literacy will be discussed. Universal enrolment, i.e., enrolment of every child of school-going age, is a much-cherished programme of our State. But, unfortunately, as census reports reveal, our progress in this field is still very slow. It is now felt that 'enrolment depends not only on the provision of schools, but also on social and economic factors'<sup>2</sup>. My aim here is to locate some of the social, economic political and cultural factors which arrest the spread of formal education to the desired extent.

The locale of my study is a village in the district of Hooghly in West Bengal. It is one among the many villages which are in the process of rapid urbanization. The village is 26 Kms. away from the Howrah Railway Station and is directly linked with it. It is connected with Serampore, an old town in the district, by 10 Kms. of metalled, motorable road on which a private bus service is operating. The rail road and the motor road are almost perpendicular to each other and they intersect at the heart of the village where the railway station is. By its side there is a daily market sitting twice a day. It serves as the business centre for people from about 15 to 20 surrounding villages and supplies green vegetables to Calcutta and its suburbs. Besides the market there are about 250 shops and commercial centres dealing with a variety of commodities. In addition, there

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are, among other establishments, a post office, a secondary school, a girls' junior high school, two primary schools, a sub-health centre and a branch of the Allahabad Bank.

Physically it is a nucleated village with a population of 2845 heads and an area of 425.82 acres. More than one-third of the total village population is economically active comprising owner-cultivators (11%), white collar job-holders (6%), agricultural labourers (10%), unskilled industrial labourers (9%), semi-skilled labourers (6%), shop keepers (10%), vendors (8%). Besides, there are some potters, barbers, weavers, carpenters, tailors, rickshaw-pullers, etc. A widely practised occupation is the parching of rice (*muri*) which, in huge quantities, is supplied to Calcutta. Quite a good number of women are employed in such activities as husking of rice, preparing paper-bags, acting as domestic servants in and outside the village. As a result of economic diversification, there is a wide-spread demand for child-labour. Children too are frequently required to supplement income of their families. A notable feature of this village is that a sizeable number of population irrespective of age and sex is engaged in illegal activities like wagon-breaking, trade of illicit liquor and illegal transaction of rice. The exact number of these people cannot be ascertained for obvious reasons.

45.4% of the village households have no land at all besides a residence and another 14.1% have residence plus a meagre amount of land. Only 5.1% households own land of more than 7 bighas.

Considering the essential elements for determining economic status (income, occupation, land ownership), it is found that about one-fourth of the households live below the subsistence level, and another one-fourth belong to middle or upper-middle income-groups.

The caste-wise distribution of the village is as follows : Brahman and Kayastha (5.3%), Mahisya (58%), other *jal-chal* castes besides Mahisya (20.7%), Bagdi (12%), and Muslim (4%). It appears that the high caste people constitute only a negligible portion of the total population of the village.

The Village has a substantial population from the Bagdi community and one should specially mention their case for a number of reasons. Besides their low caste and educational status,

their economic condition is also very low which is reflected in their dwelling pattern. The *Bagdipara* (the part of the village exclusively inhabited by this Scheduled Caste community) is actually a cluster of huts built wholly or partly by mud, hand-made tiles or thatch, and bear an appearance of squalidness. Rarely a family has two rooms or a separate kitchen or a cattle-shed. There is hardly any scope for honouring privacy in the living arrangements and the elders hardly appreciate the need for concealing matters of sex from the youngsters.

Social environment of this locality goes hand in hand with the physical environment. Alcoholism and gambling are rampant being indulged in by almost all able-bodied males. In fact, it is the women and children who bear the burden of the family. At night almost the whole *para* remains busy with breaking of railway wagons and by day-time they "relax" indulging in gambling and drinking liquor. Their earnings are not always meagre, but they have no habit of savings.

Since Bagdis live a miserable and, in a sense, licentious life and since no effort has yet been made to bring about a change in the same, the unhealthy and vicious atmosphere is spreading all over the village. Wagon-breaking, smuggling of liquor, gambling, etc., appear to the people as an 'easy' way of getting rich. No wonder, they are turning to those jobs in increasing numbers.

It is no longer at the stage of persuasion which can rectify these people and prevent them from earning an "easy" money. Application of force is necessary. But those who are in power, do not venture to take that step, for in that case they will have to risk the political support of a substantial section of the population.

Besides political interest, the *bhadralok* people have economic interest too in allowing these conditions to continue. They take help from these people to indulge in corruption and anti-social activities. The trade of illicit liquor is actually owned by the *bhadraloks* and Bagdis are hired for the purpose. The same is true of wagon-breaking. The traders buy from Bagdis stolen goods. Any sort of gentle and smooth living is closed to these illiterate, poor drunkards.

Only a small fraction of the villagers (11%) have education beyond the primary level. Still less people are employed in the white-collar jobs. Majority of them are employed in primary and secondary sectors. Mostly, the social circle of these people consists of people (inside and outside the village) who are in the comparable socio-economic status, have same educational, cultural and aspirational levels for themselves and for children.

There is hardly any mark of cultural activities in the village. As it is fast growing as a business and market centre, there is an ample opportunity for acquiring ready cash and making profit through the investment of sheer physical labour or a small amount of capital. Also, there is a scope of getting jobs like those of shop-assistants, porters, vendors, rickshaw-pullers, etc., which do not require educational qualification at all. Children from poor families flock to these jobs as soon as they get physical maturity.

## II

Let us have a look at the actual state of affairs in the sphere of educational attainments. From Table 1 it appears that of all the village population 35.5% are illiterate, while 10.8% people have some college education. Another 25.1% people have some experience of the middle school education (grades V-VIII).

Illiteracy is to be found among all castes and communities, but it is the highest in case of the Bagdis followed by the Muslims (Table 2). It is the lowest among the high castes. Considering the high incidence of the Mahisya people in the village, they have been treated as a separate category, and in case of these people the rate of illiteracy is a bit higher than that in other *jal-chal* castes. However, in subsequent stages of education the difference between these two categories is not significant. The comparatively good performance of high castes and poor performance of the Bagdis followed by the Muslims is the most prominent in the higher stages of education. *There is not a single person in the Bagdi community who has reached upto class IX;* and there are only 8 males having junior high school education. This finding testifies to the common belief that the caste status and educational standard have a close positive relationship.

Table 1

Distribution of Villagers (above 7 years of age) on the bases of  
Age, Sex and Level of Education (in percentage)

Age- group	Sex	Level of education						Total
		Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV	Cat. V	Cat. VI	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
7-11	M	24.0	47.5	23.1	5.4	—	—	221
	F	33.3	41.8	19.4	5.5	—	—	201
12-16	M	26.9	15.9	17.9	32.8	6.5	—	201
	F	31.9	7.6	17.8	33.0	9.7	—	185
17-26	M	19.2	10.5	18.6	29.4	8.7	13.6	344
	F	36.3	11.6	15.8	20.0	10.2	6.1	215
27-36	M	12.1	11.6	25.8	26.8	9.6	14.1	198
	F	46.8	11.1	21.6	16.4	2.9	1.2	171
37-51	M	22.5	13.0	13.6	29.0	9.5	12.4	169
	F	79.2	5.6	7.1	6.1	5	1.5	198
52 and above	M	27.6	13.3	24.8	20.0	4.8	9.5	105
	F	95.3	8	3.1	8	—	—	130
Total	M	264	232	251	302	83	106	1238
	F	565	154	161	156	46	18	1100
		829	386	412	458	129	124	2338
(35.5%) (16.5%) (17.6%) (19.6%) (5.5%) (5.3%) (100.1%)								

*NOTE :* Cat. I includes illiterate persons ; Cat. II includes just literate persons ; Cat. III includes persons having education upto class IV ; Cat. IV includes persons having education upto class VIII ; Cat. V includes persons who are reading in Classes IX-X or have passed the S.F. / H.S. Examination ; Cat. VI includes persons having some college education. The same principle of categorization has been followed in all subsequent tables.

The backwardness of females compared to males is conspicuously prominent in all the caste groups and in all stages of education. Yet, the difference is more marked and the backwardness of females is the most prominent among the Muslims and the Bagdis where almost all the females are illiterate—the two backward communities of the village. In the advanced stage of education, the position of Mahisya females is a bit better than that of the rest of the *jal-chal* castes.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Villagers (above 7 years of age) on the bases of Caste, Sex, and Level of Education (in percentage)

Caste & community	Sex	Level of education						N
		Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV	Cat. V	Cat. VI	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
High caste	M	7·2	13·0	17·4	29·0	11·6	21·8	69
	F	24·5	5·7	13·2	32·1	11·3	13·2	53
Mahisya	M	14·5	19·0	23·2	26·3	7·5	9·5	725
	F	45·5	17·4	15·4	15·7	4·6	1·4	650
Other <i>jal-chal</i> castes	M	13·4	18·4	21·8	30·3	7·7	8·4	261
	F	41·9	15·3	22·7	15·3	2·9	·9	229
Bagdi	M	71·8	16·2	6·3	5·7	—	—	142
	F	99·2	·8	—	—	—	—	128
Muslim	M	41·5	34·1	12·2	9·8	2·4	—	41
	F	82·5	5·0	5·0	5·0	2·5	—	40
Total %	M	21·3	18·7	20·3	24·4	6·7	8·6	100·0
	N	(264)	(232)	(251)	(302)	(83)	(106)	(1238)
%	F	51·4	14·0	14·6	14·2	4·2	1·6	100·0
N		(565)	(154)	(161)	(156)	(46)	(18)	(1100)

On further analysis of Table 1 it is found that the incidence of female illiteracy is the most conspicuous in the older age-groups where it is as high as 95.3% (those above 51 years of age). But this number is decreasing with the passage of time. Now-a-days women even show a better performance than men, particularly beyond the primary stage. While analysing data it was noted that excepting in the Scheduled Caste, almost in all other families girls are encouraged, or at least allowed, to continue study. Even in some families where boys are withdrawn from the school, girls are allowed to go on till they get married or complete the school studies, whichever is earlier.

Though one may feel happy with the progress achieved in respect of female education, such happiness will disappear if one turns attention to the attainment of boys. It is actually regress in every stage. The highest performance is shown by males of the 27-36 age-group. The condition is deteriorating from that time on.

At present what we find is that boys who are enrolled mostly withdraw at the middle stage of education. It means that though the spread of illiteracy has been checked and most of the boys are at present completing their primary education (excepting the Bagdis) and some of them are taking the middle school education, the percentage of people having secondary and college education is not rising over the years. It indicates stagnation which ultimately leads to degeneration.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 where the three generational educational mobility of the male villagers has been shown, provide further evidence to the above statement. Considering a totally different picture for the Scheduled Caste in the village, a separate table (Table 7) has been constructed to show any change occurring in this community. The inter-generational mobility in case of males only has been analysed here and females have been kept outside this analysis. It is assumed here that problems in the field of boys' education are more serious than those relating to female education in whose case a mark of development is apparent. Most of the grand-mothers or mothers were illiterate or just literate (Table 1) whereas the condition has much improved today in case of the daughters.

TABLE 3  
Educational Mobility of the Male Villagers in Three Generations  
(excepting the Scheduled Caste)

Subjects' fathers' educational level (born before 1923)	N	Subjects' educational level (born between 1923 and 1953)	N	Subjects' sons' educational level (born between 1953 and 1971)					
				Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV	Cat. V	Cat. VI
Cat. I (illiterate)	82 (38.9%)	Cat. I	40	32	32	21	13	2	—
		II	30	9	25	16	8	2	—
		III	45	6	30	21	27	1	2
		IV	34	1	13	10	5	3	—
		V	10	—	5	—	3	5	1
		VI	3	—	1	—	—	—	—
Cat. II (Just literate)	37 (17.5%)	Cat. I	9	7	4	1	4	1	—
		II	8	6	4	3	3	3	—
		III	21	1	11	8	7	6	2
		IV	26	1	13	3	6	2	—
		V	8	1	1	1	2	1	—
		VI	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
Cat. III (Upto Class IV)	47 (22.3%)	Cat. I	5	5	—	3	1	—	—
		II	7	2	5	3	4	1	—
		III	25	3	14	7	13	1	1
		IV	33	3	12	10	17	12	5
		V	13	2	5	3	9	7	3
		VI	13	—	2	5	3	1	—
Cat. IV (Class V to VIII)	27 (12.8%)	Cat. I	4	—	2	2	2	1	—
		II	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
		III	5	—	6	3	3	1	—
		IV	22	3	8	3	11	2	1
		V	24	—	5	4	11	9	6
		VI	16	—	—	1	1	1	—
Cat. V & VI (Class IX +)	18 (8.5%)	Cat. I	3	4	—	1	1	—	—
		II	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
		III	7	—	3	4	2	—	—
		IV	9	—	1	3	2	1	3
		V	5	—	—	2	1	1	—
		VI	10	—	—	1	3	—	—
N = 211*			438*	87	202	140	162	64	24

\* All the people in the group are not alive at present.

TABLE 4

Educational Mobility of Subjects vis-a-vis Their Fathers  
(excepting the Scheduled Caste)

Subjects' fathers' educational level	Subjects' level of education					Total
	Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV	Cat. V & VI	
Cat. I	40	30	45	34	13	162
Cat. II	9	8	21	26	10	74
Cat. III	5	7	25	33	26	96
Cat. IV	4	—	5	22	40	71
Cat. V & VI	3	1	7	9	15	35
Total	61	46	103	124	104	438
	(14.0%)	(10.3%)	(23.5%)	(28.3%)	(23.7%)	

TABLE 5

Educational Mobility of Subjects vis-a-vis Their Sons  
(excepting the Scheduled Caste)

Subjects level of education	Subjects' Sons' level of education						Total
	Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV	Cat. V	Cat. VI	
Cat. I	48	38	28	21	4	—	139
Cat. II	18	34	22	15	6	—	95
Cat. III	10	64	43	52	9	5	183
Cat. IV	8	47	29	41	20	9	154
Cat. V	3	16	10	26	23	10	88
Cat. VI	—	3	8	7	2	—	20
Total	87	202	140	162	64	24	679
	(12.9%)	(29.7%)	(20.6%)	(23.9%)	(9.4%)	(3.5%)	

What has been found in Table 2, is being confirmed in Tables 3, 4 and 5. Level of illiteracy has remarkably gone down. In the fathers' generation, whereas there were 38.9% illiterates, in subjects' generation, this rate decreased to 14% and in sons' generation, it has further gone down to 12.9%. It is further observed that upward mobility was markedly noticeable in the subjects' generation where as high as 52% people got admitted to the secondary school and 23.7% people continued study beyond the secondary stage. In the sons' generation the incidence of both these groups has decreased to 36.8% and 12.9% respectively. In fathers' generation, the second highest percentage (the highest percentage is of the illiterates) is of those who terminated education at primary stage. In the subjects' generation the highest per cent of people got admitted to the middle school. In the sons' generation, the highest percentage (29.7%) is of those who are just literate, i.e., have only the simple knowledge of the Three R's.

A fact deserves mention here. In the sons' generation, many of the people are still students (age varies from 7 to 25 in this group) and that may be a partial explanation for why the progress is so poor in this generation. Still a downward mobility is evident.

It is a curious finding that not a single person in the sons' generation who has read / is at present reading in the college has father having college education.

What has been said above can be strengthened by the data collected from schools and presented in Table 6.

From Table 6 it appears that enrolment is rising over the years. But this trend is more marked in the lower classes. This is because of the high rate of discontinuation the magnitude of which can be more fully exposed from the following data. In one of the two primary schools of the village in the year 1977, 56 students (39 boys and 17 girls) were admitted in class I. Of them, 9 (6 boys and 3 girls) are at present reading in class IV ; 34 (20 boys and 14 girls) are reading in class III ; 5 boys are reading in class II, and 8 boys have discontinued the study. It means, only 16% (those who are reading in class IV) are "genuine" students, and 70% are the "repeaters" who constitute the case of stagnation while 14% belong to the case of "wastage".

TABLE 6  
Enrolment of Boys and Girls in Classes I—V (1969-1979)

Year	Sex- and class-wise enrolment									
	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Class V	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1969	31	38	37	25	45	19	18	13	19	
1970	46	46	28	31	41	26	29	18	17	
1971	51	35	40	48	27	27	34	19	30	
1972	46	48	36	19	35	38	23	21	25	
1973	43	34	45	44	36	27	15	21	20	
1974	42	27	34	27	39	36	28	18	19	
1975	34	31	40	33	31	35	22	23	19	
1976	56	29	29	40	28	28	24	22	24	
1977	61	44	37	24	34	33	17	25	27	
1978	48	59	44	39	43	29	20	25	32	
1979	63	41	48	42	40	38	31	25	26	

\* Data regarding admission of girl students to Class V have not been obtained.

An utterly dismal picture appears from Table 6 where the educational mobility (?) of the Bagdi community of the village has been shown. Still, in the sohs' generation 74.2% people are illiterate and 16.5% are just literate, whereas the rate of illiteracy was 66.7% in the subjects' generation and 89.3% in the fathers' generation. As in the case of caste Hindus, here also an upward mobility has been observed in subjects' generation which is reversed in the sons' generation. There are only four persons in the sons' generation who have the experience of the middle school education and none has gone beyond that level.

TABLE 7

## Educational Mobility of the Scheduled Caste People in the Village in Three Generations.

Subjects' fathers' level of education	Subjects' level of education	Subjects' sons' level of education			
		Cat. I	Cat. II	Cat. III	Cat. IV
Cat. I (n = 25)	Cat. I (n = 32)	58	4	—	3
	Cat. II (n = 10)	7	4	—	—
	Cat. III (n = 2)	—	2	—	—
	Cat. IV (n = 2)	4	1	4	1
Cat. II (n = 1)	Cat. I (n = 1)	—	2	—	—
	Cat. II (n = 1)	3	—	1	—
Cat. IV (n = 2)	Cat. I (n = 1)	—	—	—	—
	Cat. III (n = 2)	—	3	—	—
N = 28	51	72	16	5	4

Studies covering a wide region also find similar trend. For example, Sarkar<sup>8</sup> observes a static literacy position in the age-groups of 20-24 and 25-29 which indicates "a poor progress in literacy during sixties".

## III

From discussions with villagers in different occupational and educational status, several reasons for the above unhappy condition can be delineated. Obviously, the most prominent reason for the withdrawal of children from schools as soon as they reach the age of 13/14 is the poverty of the people. For, economic support is necessary not only to meet the cost of a child's education (private tutor, books, stationery), but also to release him from the labour support he can provide to his family. If a family releases a boy to receive education even at the cost of decreasing the wherewithal of the family, it may be taken as an indicator of a high degree of internalization of the value of education and motivation for the same.



Such cases can hardly be expected from the poor, mostly illiterate villagers who have less control over the future, less opportunity to improve their position, and less income to invest. Their environment makes them fatalistic, present-time oriented, concerned with immediate gratification, and emphatic on sticking to group behaviour rather than developing one of his own.

Yet, for this village, poverty, though a main reason, is not the sole reason for the early withdrawal of children from schools. The economic condition of the village has much improved compared to the condition, say, 30 years ago, and it is improving, though slowly, day by day. But curiously enough, as is evident from data, level of education is going down as the economic condition is improving, which indicates, an inverse relation between spread of education and economic development. Obviously, then, besides poverty, there are other factors no less important. Some of these factors are exogenous and some are local and their combined interaction is intermingled. It is, therefore, difficult to say which one is the root or most important factor.

Villagers are aware of the fact that education brings knowledge and skill which are useful in securing urban jobs, dealing with formal organizations and authorities, and acquiring higher prestige. However, this is not an unmitigated boon. The accrual of employment benefits is constrained in two ways. Because of the uncertainty of securing a job after the completion of the course, the problem of the educated unemployed is there. And because of the absence of the dignity of labour in our society, a boy who has only appeared at the School Final Examination, begins to hate agricultural activities even in his own farm or his hereditary caste occupation or jobs involving physical labour, and seeks some kind of white-collar job. Obviously, that is not available most of the times. Ultimately, after the lapse of several years of unemployment he either becomes an unskilled industrial labourer or opens a petty shop in the village. Consequently, villagers tend to feel that while education uproots their sons from the traditional rural occupational structure, it does not guarantee urban employment. As the number of these afflicted persons is increasing, the attraction for education is proportionately diminishing.

All that is valued by the villagers is the instrumental significance of education. And here lies the greatest defect of our educational policy. What children learn from schools comes of no practical help ; the courses are too bookish and uninteresting. Instead of being utilized to improve agriculture, education is being looked upon as an avenue to escape from it. And this is quite natural as education reflects the values of ruling class (urban intellectuals and businessmen) and protects their interest.

As education proceeds within the cultural and linguistic framework of the upper class, members of the lower class fail to cope with it because they do not possess the family background and other pre-requisites as to profit by that kind of education. On the other hand, if an attempt is made to adapt the curriculum to the language, culture and capacity of the masses, there is every likelihood that these people will find out some sinister motive in it and may discard it on the suspicion that they are being deliberately debarred from acquiring the kind of education needed for economic and social advancement. This fear is not at all baseless. For, here we find that occupational opportunities are preferentially available to students from the better school and an education becomes an instrument of social stratification rather than of social mobility. Most of the papers presented in the XIV All India Sociological Conference held at Jabalpur in December, 1978, (Panel I), too, express similar concern. In India, as long as English remains the language of administration, legislation and economic transactions, it will also retain its superiority as a medium of education.

Quite naturally, villagers get frustrated with the whole system of education, and what is more serious, they are losing faith in both education and in the educated. Often they are heard to remark, "This education is for the rich only. We can neither afford it, nor can we use or apply it".

Villagers often complain that teachers now-a-days do not take care of students ; also, the syllabus is too heavy and difficult. It is, therefore, hard to follow and prepare the lessons without the help of private tutors. So though they are no longer required to pay tuition-fee in schools, the cost of education has, unfortunately, increased. Quite inevitably, schools reflect the cultural bias of the teachers and

students who are mostly drawn from higher castes and status groups. Students from lower castes, whose parents are mostly either illiterate or just literate, find the experience in the school punitive and they seek to avoid it. Day by day they lag behind their class mates. Sometimes teachers also are heard to make unkind and impatient remarks on their inability to cope with others. In the examination they get poor marks and add to the number of repeaters. When these incidents are repeated for two or three years, both the students and parents lose interest and use in continuing study and they drop out.

Teachers of both the primary and secondary schools, on being asked, have frankly admitted their responsibility. But at the same time they too have highlighted the reasons for their helplessness. In the primary schools there are three teachers for about 220 pupils reading in five classes: infant, classes I, II, III, and IV. The schools have no peon or bearer. Obviously, in the same hour a teacher may have to take care of mathematics in one class, of history with another batch and Bengali with a third group. If one teacher is absent, and such absence occurs occasionally as teachers themselves have to carry out all the clerical duties, one can only imagine the situation. The teachers admit that to cope with the situation they have to generate a kind of fear psychosis. Also they have to devise different ingenuous methods to control the students, which are definitely not for imparting right type of education. They fully know it, but still they are helpless for they do not have either scope or energy for teaching.

Many of the children come from illiterate families or from families where both the parents have to work hard throughout the day for earning a living, or where the fathers are drunkards and mothers have neither time nor ability to personally supervise their children's education. These families shift the total responsibility of their wards' education, even of learning the alphabets, to teachers. Obviously, they get disappointed. Under the circumstances, both the teachers and guardians expect each other to take care of the child, and both of them fail to be equal to the task. Ultimately, children suffer and so does the spread of education. Parents do not have time to keep a constant vigil on their children. They send them to school, but if they play truant, what can the parents do? Such

children often give wrong information about their attendance and attainment in the school and hide their school-reports from guardians. Being disgusted, parents employ them to some gainful activities.

It is true, a substantial portion of the guardians do not cherish any high aspiration level for their wards. Their attitude is like this : Children of the families like ours will not be doctors and engineers, nor even M.A.s or B.A.s. At best we can afford the child to be an S.F ; but it will not guarantee him any white-collar job. Instead, it will create many problems. So what is the necessity of continuing ? A simple knowledge of reading, writing and accounting is all that they need.

The families of small farmers (and in the village almost all the farmers are small) often eagerly wait for school holidays and vacations so that they may utilize the service of the children in the field. In the morning before going to the school and after returning from the school in the afternoon, the children have to go to the field (the same is applicable to the families of petty shop-keepers too). Consequently, children find little time to prepare lessons.

Above all, the village provides a scope for earning "easy money" to which both the children and their poor parents get attracted. The shops and the market, the railway station, the transport facilities — which provide bread for the villagers and are the roots of their development, also, paradoxically, affect their progress in education.

Last but not the least, villagers complain that the overall atmosphere of the village is not congenial to the spread of education. A number of factors are responsible for it. Majority of the villagers do not have high aspiration either for themselves or for their children. There is ample scope for earning money. Alcoholism is rampant here. The bad example of the Bagdi community pollutes the whole village atmosphere. Above all, common villagers do not highly value education. A rich or a powerful person is more respected than an educated one lacking in sufficient money or high position. Chattopadhyay also has observed the same things : "... higher education is not sought by the majority because it has no positive value for them. As such, the man who gets higher education is also not of much consequence just because he is educated" <sup>4</sup>.

The reasons for the backwardness of the Bagdi community are self-evident. All sorts of evils are there. But these people as well as others in the village take these things for granted ; faith in heredity and fatalism are writ large over them. Two or three young men from this community who got a bit education, a gentle job and middleclass cultivated friendship with *bhadrolok* people, left either their locality or the village in utter despair. They were very much sceptic regarding the improvement of their fellows.

#### IV

Obviously, the discussion is not complete and here I have mentioned only the major factors and forces limiting the spread of education for boys beyond the primary stage. The study is sociological and so I have tried to focus on *interaction* and combined effects of different sub-systems on the sub-system of education. It is my contention that no particular objective or subjective factor is singly responsible for the problem. It is the whole design, the total atmosphere of the community—its class, caste and occupational structures and ecology together with the values and attitudes of the people, that has to be simultaneously studied with the study of the effectiveness of a school and other facilities provided by the government.

The point to be noted here is that the problem for this village is not the problem of fighting illiteracy (excepting the Bagdi community) but stagnation. One may argue that this is not at all a problem in the perspective of our immediate national goal and condition. For, the problem ahead of us is that of eradicating illiteracy, and that the spread of higher education leads to a number of problems like educated unemployment, deterioration of standards, campus violence and so on.

But the contention of the present researcher is that education for common students beyond the middle school stage, i.e., class VIII, may be a luxury, may have a consumption rather than an investment bias<sup>5</sup>. However, it is for the welfare of everybody concerned that every child must complete class VIII, which is not at all occurring in our villages. In its absence what is occurring is that the leadership in all fields is lying with the urban middle class intelligentsia. And

the semi-literate, poor villagers are being denied access to the decision-making bodies. An education upto the grade VIII is the minimum requirement to produce trained farmers, skilled workers and good citizens who can have both an understanding of and interest in grasping the problems of the country and also capacity to solve the same. Unless the masses are elevated to this level, they cannot be made conscious, united or involved in the nation-building activities. What is more serious is the hiatus, the widening gulf, between the educated and the non-educated, the urban and the rural, the middle and the lower class people. It leads to mutual distrust and hate and aggravates the problem of maldistribution. This condition can hardly, if ever, bring about the desired unity, solidarity, stability and welfare of the country.\*

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- \* My primary debt is to Dr. Swapan K. Bhattacharyya, my teacher and now colleague. Originally a collaborator, he suggested the basic theme and the format of the study. Other commitments drew him away from this project but he remained a helpful critic long after he ceased to be a collaborator.
- 1. "Wastage" has been defined as "premature withdrawal of children from school at any stage before the completion of the primary course", while "stagnation" has been defined to mean "the retention in a lower class of a child for a period of more than one year" (*Interim Report of the Indian Statutory Commission* [ The Hartog Committee ] Delhi, The Manager of Publications, Government of India Press, 1929, p. 47).
- 2. *The Indian Year Book of Education*, 1961 : A Review of Education in India (1947-61), N C E R T, 1965, p. 225.
- 3. B. N. Sarkar, Education Development in Rural West Bengal, August 1979, D R U Publication No. 7, Indian Statistical Institute, mimeo, p. 9.
- 4. G. Chattopadhyay, *Ranjana : A Village in West Bengal*, 1964, Bookland Private Ltd., Calcutta, p. 55.
- 5. N C E R T, *Wastage and Stagnation in Primary and Middle Schools*, 1969, New Delhi, p. 13.

## WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN INDIA : A REVIEW OF STUDIES, 1950-1980

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K. K. CHAUDHURI

### *Introduction*

After the Second World War, the concept of workers' participation in management has gained ground rapidly both in socialist and capitalist countries. The main aim of workers' participation in management is to help in increasing production and productivity and sharing the gains of productivity through more effective management and better industrial relations. The experiment is now being conducted in many parts of the world. Towards this end, the Government of India has introduced a number of schemes since Independence. During this period, a number of studies have been conducted to highlight different aspects of workers' participation in India.

The present attempt is to prepare a trend report based on the bibliography of the papers, books and reports which were published during 1950 - 1980. This is designed to be broadly comprehensive though not exhaustive. Books and articles of a repetitive nature have as far as possible been eliminated. The published works in this country in the field of workers' participation in management can be divided into the following major areas : (1) concept and scope of participation, (2) comparative assessment of participation, (3) government policy and participation, (4) pre-requisites of participation, (5) management's role in participation, (6) evaluation of existing situation, (7) effects of participation, and (8) suggestions.

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*Concept and Scope of Participation*

The concept of workers' participation is not of recent origin. The idea of workers' involvement in decision making was advocated by the 19th century social thinkers. But only after the First World War, the idea came into practice with the establishment of joint committees and works councils in different countries. During the First World War (1914-18), in an attempt to sustain war production, the Government of Britain sought the cooperation of the employers' associations and trade unions and, with their consent, introduced emergency legislation making strikes and lockouts illegal, and machinery for compulsory arbitration was set up. This action served to enhance the status of trade unions and to encourage the conclusion of collective agreements of national scope, but it did not prevent industrial unrest. Accordingly, in October 1916, the Government established a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. J.H. Whitley to consider and present suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and work-people. The Whitley Committee's reports, published in 1917 and 1918, identified and recommended the formation of joint industrial councils in industries where both employers and workers have adequate organisation ; and the setting up of works councils at individual establishments to represent jointly both employers and employees. In 1919 the Industrial Courts Act gave effect to several of the committee's proposals, and between 1918 and 1921 a number of joint industrial councils and works councils were started (Manpower and Employment in Britain, British Information Services, London, 1976, pp. 26-27). Factory councils in Russia were set in 1917 legislation relating to works councils was incorporated in Austria (1919), Germany (1920) and Czechoslovakia (1920) (Labour Management Relations Series, No. 33, ILO, Geneva, 1969, p. 1).

After the First World War, the experiments of Elton Mayo and his Harvard colleagues, at the Hawthorne plant of Western Electric Company in Ciero near Chicago during 1924 to 1932, once again advocated workers' participation in management. Mayo emphasised that individual worker can improve his own job if he participates in decisions concerning his work. Subsequently, along with emphasis on the individual and his work-group, participative management has become increasingly accepted in modern industries.

In India, the idea of workers' participation was actually supported and encouraged by legislation, by incorporating it in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, Section 3(1) and 3(2), which provided for establishment of statutory works committee. Subsequently, Government of India has introduced workers' participation schemes like joint management council (1958), worker-director (1971), shop councils and joint councils (1975), and workers' participation in management in commercial and service organisations (1977). The formal objectives of workers' participation in India as formulated in the Resolution of Ministry of Labour (1975) fall into two categories : (i) goals predominantly benefitting management (setting and reaching higher production targets, the optimal utilisation of manpower, correcting factors interfering with productivity, controlling absenteeism and maintaining discipline in the labour force), and (ii) goals mainly benefitting the labour force (safety measures, reducing fatigue, improving physical working conditions, and developing manpower training programmes).

The authors like Chandra (1978), Dastur (1972), Ghosh and Vall (1978), Gupta (1977), Huss (1977), Jain (1976), Saxena (1977), Sethi (1978), Sheth (1977) and Singh (1975) have highlighted several issues on the concept of participation in the Indian context.

Chandra (1978) made a preliminary discussion of the concept of workers' participation. He suggested a two-pronged approach to create the infra-structure of policies, practices and legislative regulations in the area of employee relations and the organisation of facilities for imparting training to workers in the enterprise. A provision in law for the formation of three-tier machinery of labour participation at the enterprise level, state level and national level has been prescribed. Ghosh and Vall (1978) have suggested a theoretical framework based on seven variables : (a) social perception, (b) power equalization, (c) self-actualisation, (d) organisational structure, (e) knowledge differential, (f) union involvement, and (g) total amount of control available to workers and management. Saxena (1977) has presented a three-tier approach for a meaningful process of workers' participation and stressed the need for machinery for follow-up and implementation of the scheme. Sethi (1978) argued that in the present socio-economic situation,

India needs a social transformation to eliminate the existing conflict between labour and capital. It may be achieved through Gandhian principle of 'trusteeship' or workers' participation in management. This will also change the functional role of workers as the decision-makers. In this process, the role of trade unions will also be transformed from that of 'bargaining agent' in a conflict model to a 'steering agent' in an associated — work model. Shekh (1977) suggested that labour-management co-partnership should be incorporated in terms of a programme at the primary level of industrial organisation to pool the human and intellectual resources of managers and workers towards achievement of agreed goals of productivity and efficiency. This programme has to be designed as a part of the total management process rather than as a committee. When such participation at the grass-roots level becomes established and viable part of industrial organisation, it is likely to create an urge among workers to participate at higher levels. He also suggested the question of workers' participation in ownership of industry. Singh (1975) proposed giving the workers a direct share in management by associating them at the board level.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Comparative Assessment of Participation*

The authors like Bijlani (1976), Das (1964), Dayal (1976), Jena (1959), Karnik (1977), Narayan (1975), Pandey (1975), Somani (1977), Thakur and Sethi (1973), Verma (1970) and two publications of the Government of India (1957), (1958) analysed situations of workers' participation in other countries and examined the scope for participation in India.

Das (1964) evaluated the working of joint consultation and collaboration schemes in the developed countries and analysed why workers' participation had failed to make any significant progress in India. He emphasised that the experiments of industrial democracy have been somewhat successful in western countries, because it is suitable in the socio-economic conditions of the country. Dayal (1976) made a survey of cross-cultural comparisons on the linkage between job satisfaction and participation across four countries : two industrialised i.e., USA and Japan and two developing countries i.e., India and Peru. He pointed out that the inducement for participation may have other purposes than increase in production or

satisfaction to employees. The reasons may be extra-organisational, like pursuit of development of an egalitarian society, removing inequality in the social stratification, etc. Karnik (1977) discussed different methods adopted in various countries for ensuring participation, such as collective bargaining, joint councils and co-determination in West Germany and self-management in Yugoslavia and have shown how the demand for participation has arisen in all industrial societies. Soman (1977) also reviewed the experiences of Sweden, Britain and USA and compared the Indian situation in this regard. He has suggested that (a) an environment should be created whereby the workers would be exposed to the decision-making process and to a galaxy of managerial issues over a period of time; and (b) the restoration of workers and officers to their proper places in the interest of a more rapid socio-economic development. Thakur and Sethi (1973) edited a seminar volume. The articles of the book discussed the background and the conceptual aspects of workers' participation in management, the international experiences, particularly the practice prevailing in some of the western countries like: Norway, USA, Yugoslavia and Germany and their application in India. Verma (1970) examined the concept of participation and surveyed its practice in some of the countries. He has also mentioned the reasons of failure of workers' participation schemes in India and abroad. The Government of India's Report (1957) of the Tri-partite Indian Study Group, which visited countries like France, Germany, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Britain and Sweden, presented the working of the scheme of workers' participation in management. The Government Report of 1958 also evaluated the applicability of the European model of workers' participation in management to Indian industries.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Government Policy and Participation*

Dutta (1976), Kamaraju (1977), Keshari (1961), Kothari (1977), Pillai (1971), Punekar (1977), Sahoo (1971), Sharma (1976), Tulpule (1975), and one Report of the Government of India (1964) have pointed out different aspects of Government policy regarding workers' participation.

Kamraju (1977) has reviewed Government of India's policy regarding industrial democracy and pointed out some defects as well

as made some suggestions for the better operation of the scheme. Keshari (1961) discussed various aspects of the system of workers' participation in management in India. He has suggested that a determined effort will have to be made to provide the worker to take initiative in participation. The Government should formulate comprehensive legislation enabling private and public enterprises to give representation to worker in their respective committees. Kothari (1977) reviewed the participation schemes introduced by Government of India from 1947 onwards and discussed the scope and limitations of works committees and other relevant committees provided for in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. He appreciated the present steps towards worker-participation in management and made some suggestions regarding the guidelines to be followed by the workers and management for successful implementation of the scheme. Pillai (1971) remarked that mere representation of workers on the board will not be helpful. Participation of the worker in the management of an enterprise should start from the shopfloor and not from above. He has pointed out the inadequacy in developing this trait in industry in the labour policy in India since independence. He stressed the need should be workers' participation in management of trade unions and the elimination of politicians from the management of these unions and then to encourage collective bargaining. Punekar (1975) also reviewed the earlier experiments of workers' participation schemes and pointed out the disadvantages and measures there of. He felt that the principle of co-partnership between management and labour had received a new impetus following its inclusion in the twenty-point economic programme of the Government of India in 1975. Tulpule (1975) has commented on the decision of the Government of India on participative management and its likely impact. He raised the question of promotional efforts by the Government to ensure the success of workers' participation. He emphasised that the scheme of shop councils and joint councils (1975), apart from the inclusion in the twenty-point programme and in the release of Government resolution, there had been no promotional activity of any kind. He also asked : "Does the present scheme have any inherent improvement over the previous one that would enhance the prospects of its success ? This like the previous scheme, is for voluntary adoption with help and

encouragement from the Government". The Government of India's (1964) report made the different proposals and the steps taken by the Government on workers' participation in management.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Pre-requisites of Participation*

For this section, we need to consider Alexander (1972), Chakraborty (1976), Datar (1977), Dayal (1976), Kamaraju (1971), Krishnaswamy (1979), Lavakare (1977), Moorthy and Narayana (1970), Rath and Murthy (1975) and Sheth (1972) have indentified different pre-requisites of participation.

Alexander (1972) from his studies in two large textile mills with similar technologies concluded that the success of the scheme of participation depends on organisational health. He also mentioned that there is positive correlation between participation and organisational health. Dayal (1976) reviewed research findings on worker-involvement and job-satisfaction through participation in management, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, etc. He mentioned that, if a participative pattern of interaction is proposed for social considerations, additional measures are necessary to achieve the social and industrial objectives. The participative system of management can succeed if relationships are based on personalised interface in the first instance, and move towards a more participative institutionalised relationship when a measure of understanding and faith is developed among employees at all levels. This is a challenge facing the organisational leadership. Kamaraju (1971) discussed the following pre-requisites of participation : (a) a strong trade union, (presence of a full complement of technical experts in the unions conversant with the techniques and finance of industry, (c) a cooperative spirit on the part of both management and the workers, and (d) a well-planned programme of workers' education and management training. Krishnaswamy (1979) considered that competence of an individual is an important pre-requisite to be considered before what kinds of power could be assigned to him. Lavakare pointed out the need to motivate and train workers, trade union leaders and managers as the important pre-requisites of workers' participation. Moorthy and Narayana (1970) presented the results of a survey in twentyseven industries in and around Visakhapatnam with regard to workers' participation in

labour welfare activities. The results indicated that the level, extent and intensity of participation is often determined by the leadership of the union, the relations between the unions and management, the previous experience and a congenial atmosphere.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Management's Role in Participation*

Alexander (1972), Desai (1976), Dhingra (1972), Monga (1978), Padmanabhan (1976), Vikram (1975), and Zahir (1977) have emphasised management's interest and role in effective implementation of participation schemes.

Alexander (1972) made a comparative study of two firms to bring out their structural conditions conducive to and uncongenial for workers' participation. A major factor seemed to have contributed largely in one case to the success of workers' participation and its institutionalisation, namely top management's interest and participation. Desai (1976) has suggested personnel managers can play a catalytic role in participative management. Initially the managers may have to explain their actions to labour, and this calls for more skill by managers and delays the action itself. The author also discussed the concept of information-sharing and presented a model for successful operation of participation at all levels. Dhingra (1972) attempted to provide data on the orientation and possible behaviour-value patterns of managers on the following lines : (a) measuring the extent and nature of pre-disposition of the public sector managers towards participativeness based on empirical data about their personal value-system ; (b) the pre-disposition differentials among managers with respect to variables like their level of operation, functions handled, professional education, age, etc. ; (c) the potential of the managers' participative pre-disposition for influencing their behaviour as seen in terms of their perceived criteria of work effectiveness and pragmatic concern for achievement of organisational goals ; and (d) the relation to career success achieved by the managers with participative and non-participative pre-disposition, as an indication of how organisations reward managers with different styles of operation. Monga's study (1978) of managers and workers in five public sector enterprises in Haryana, revealed that managers have many reservations about the scope of participation by the workers. He concluded the participation in industry is not going to

make headway unless there is substantial attitudinal change among the managers. Padmanabhan (1976) mentioned the pros and cons of participation, and points out the responsibilities a personnel manager has to bear and the authority to be given to him for the effective functioning of workers' participation schemes.<sup>5</sup>

### *Evaluation of Existing Situations*

The following authors have evaluated the existing situations of workers' participation in management in our country : Ayyar (1976), Bhatia (1971), Bhattacharya (1976), Chandra (1973), De (1977), Hasan (1972), Kishore (1977), Krishnan Nair (1970), Lavakare (1977), Malavia (1977), Mankidy (1976), Mehta (1976), Mhetras (1966), Passi (1973), Patil (1971), Prashad (1967), Pylee (1973), (1975), Singh (1976), Tanic (1969), Tata (1977), Thiagarajan (1979), and two Reports of the Government of India (1959), (1965).

Bhatia (1971) pointed out the reason of failure of joint management councils in industry. They are : (a) lack of enthusiasm on the part of both labour and employers, (b) employers' aversion to multiplicity of such bodies, (c) low propensity of trade union leaders to participate, (d) lack of education and induction programmes for workers, (e) fear of criticism and reprisals of the worker-participants, (f) apathy of managers to share decision-making authority with workers, (g) bureaucratic structure of the public sector and non-recognition of trade unions by management due to multiplicity of unions. Chandra (1973), (1977) made an account of the success of participation schemes at various enterprises. He also emphasised that the participation scheme does not eliminate the need for collective bargaining. He has suggested that employees' participation in ownership could make employee-participation in management more extensive and purposive. De (1977) discussed the difficulties in implementing the Government schemes. He has differentiated between industrial democracy representation in industrial democracy and specified various forums for interest-related issues and work-related issues. He has suggested some support systems for the effective functioning of participative forums such as training programmes, secretarial assistance, communication through house journals, etc. Hasan (1972) examined the system of inclusion of worker-directors in boards of management. He suggested

that the real utility of such a system lies in the fact that it facilitates the flow of information from top to bottom and vice-versa and gives to the worker a sense of participation in management and a status of participation in decision-making. Kishore (1977) examined the exciting scheme of labour participation in Bhilai Steel Plant. He explained some of the impediments and suggested some positive steps to overcome the hinderances to labour-participation in decision-making. Lavakare (1977) surveyed selected industrial organisations in the public and private sectors in and around Delhi. He evaluated the design of the scheme, its incorporation, nomination of workers and management's representatives, furnishing of information and communication, the role of trade unions, the achievements of the scheme, management's attitude towards the scheme and training for participation. Malavia (1977) studied a sample of 189 supervisory personnel at two textile mills in Gujarat. His study revealed that there exists a relationship between participation and job-satisfaction and job-effectiveness. None of the individual and personality variables are correlated with participation nor are there any difference in job satisfaction or job effectiveness of individuals with a varying contact personality factor but having a similar degree of perception. Perception of participation is not merely subjective, but is to some extent governed by the actual work situation. Mehta (1976) made an analysis of the data collected from a group of workers' representatives on joint shopfloor committees in large public sector undertaking. He has emphasised on work-satisfaction, socio-political outlook and life satisfaction with participation. Mhetras (1966) discussed the following issues handled by the joint management councils viz., canteen, safety and welfare, production and methods of work suggestions for resolving grievances and complaints, personnel matters, managerial prerogatives and collective bargaining issues. He pointed out that majority of these issues are for discussion and information having no positive results. Lastly, he has suggested the conditions on which joint management council can function with greater success. Passi (1973) remarked that works committees and joint management councils have failed to obtain the support of the management or the employees because too much faith was laid on more forums of participation. He has considered that participation process ultimately should be taken into consideration. Pylee (1973),

(1975) discussed the setting up and functioning of joint management councils from 1960 onwards. He has pointed out the failure of the scheme and identified the reasons and pre-conditions for its introduction. He concluded that the environment in which they have to function is not conducive to their growth. In his book he has analysed the basic assumptions underlying the scheme and its evolution in India. He has also presented some case studies on the scheme. Singh (1976) presented the experience of the implementation of workers' participation in management in Tata Iron and Steel Company. He has analysed the different functional units which constitute the joint consultation machinery comprising of three tiers : joint department councils ; joint works' council ; and joint town council and joint consultative council of management at the apex. Tanic (1969) discussed the setting up and working of Works Committees (WCs) and Joint Management Councils (JMCs) in Indian industries. He has pointed out the divergent attitudes of the workers, trade unions and managements towards JMCs. At last, he has mentioned about the limited success which WCs and JMCs have had in achieving their ideals of industrial democracy, particularly the socio-political reasons. Tata (1977) remarked that the scheme of shop councils and joint councils is a "scaled down re-incarnation of the old concept of workers' participation". He appreciated the element of flexibility in the scheme which enables arrangements to be made in different undertakings based on individual circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Effects of Participation*

Singh (1977), Srivastava (1976) and a report of the Government of India (1959) have assessed the effects of different workers' participation schemes.

Singh (1977) studied the effects of participation in steel industry. He has mentioned that in 1969, a National Joint Consultative Committee was set up to deal with the problems of steel industry as a whole at the national level with fifteen workers' representatives. He made a detailed account of various joint committees and their methods of operation in all the steel industries. The gains secured by such a scheme are : (a) the entire organisation structure of the steel industry has become more open to various viewpoints and

ideas from all levels working in the organisation, and provided clear channels of communications ; (b) loss of man-hours in the steel industry have shown a steep decline ; (c) steel production, manpower productivity indices have shown upward trends ; and (d) a healthy employee-employer relationship was established. Srivastava (1976) described the experiences of two workshops on the functioning of joint councils organised in two large units of a heavy industry corporation. The Government of India's study (1959) has revealed that the object of promoting goodwill between the employees and employers and resolving the day-to-day problems of workers has been achieved and their utility realised by both the parties. With a spirit of give and take in the settlement of issues, the implementation of joint decisions were found to be satisfactory to the workers. The number of workers' representatives on each works committee was either equal to or more than that of the management. The nature of relationship of the management with the unions appeared to have much to do with the representative character of the union. In a majority of the undertakings no difficulty was experienced in the functioning of works committees.

### *Suggestions*

Arunachalam (1977), Bhatia (1973), Buch (1973), Chaudhuri (1979), Mahapatra (1978), Meena (1973), Mukherjee (1977), Nair (1977), Nigam (1975), Panakel, Shaik Ali and Warrier (1977), Ramanujam (1977), Sarkar (1973), Shukla (1971), Warrier (1976), (1978) and Viswanathan and Sridharan (1975) have made different kinds of suggestions for the success and proper implementation of the workers' participation schemes.

Arunachalam (1977) stressed the need for periodic evaluation of participation schemes. He has pointed out that the capacities of manager to operate a system of workers' participation and workers' capacity to contribute to managerial decisions are equally important for the success of schemes. Buch (1973) also proposed that the managerial attitude towards workers will have to be changed radically. There is need for job security, better working condition, elimination of suspicion, a system of sharing gains of productivity, etc. The state has to play a positive role in maintaining the supply of essential raw

materials, power, transport, etc. Chaudhuri (1979) advocated that in order to implement the schemes of workers' participation in management, the following factors should be considered carefully : (a) social and political environment, (b) participation potential of the enterprise, (c) workers' propensity to participate in management, (d) management's attitude towards participation and (e) trade union's acceptance. He also stressed the need for workers' education. Lastly, he suggested that participative management has basic contradictions in terms of diversity of goals and role-conflict among government, management and union. In the public sector, where government is managing the industry, the schemes of workers' participation can be fruitfully implemented. Mahapatra (1978) stressed the need for involvement of middle managers and supervisors for the implementation of participative management schemes. He felt that an attempt should be made to organise democratic forums within each industry, such as '*Shram Panch*' and '*Shram Parishad*' with equal representation of management and workers. Nigam (1975) made two suggestions to make the scheme successful : (a) setting a time limit for the setting up of the councils and (b) education and training for workers. He also mentioned that the public sector has a great responsibility to become the forerunners. Ramanujam (1977) thought that a selective approach would be useful for gaining necessary experience so that a scheme could be evolved for phased general application, with suitable modifications. This would help to overcome the traditional resistance of the management and the agitational role of the trade unions. Sarkar (1973) emphasised the importance of motivation of workers in this regard. His suggestion is to nominate workers so as to form a majority of the directors in the public sector undertakings. Sukla (1971) pointed out for the smooth working of industrial democracy, the workers themselves should raise its necessity and aspire for it. For this, they should possess the necessary capacity and technical knowledge. Warrier (1976), (1978) felt the need for changes in the attitudes of concerned parties for operationalising any scheme of workers' participation in management. He also advocated supplementation of the scheme with socio-technical system of work-organisation at the shop-floor level.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Experiments of workers' participation came to industries in Western Europe after the First World War with the active initiative of the trade union movement and is seen as a part of political struggle. In India, workers' participation was introduced through government initiative and not through trade union pressure. Therefore, workers' participation is not charged with any political or ideological connotations. It merely means that workers should participate in decisions related to different management functions. There are three basic questions behind it: (i) In what decisions should workers participate? (ii) How should workers participate i.e. in what form/level? (iii) Why should workers participate? The answers to these questions depend largely on the industrial relations situations of the country and vary from organization to organization.

The studies reviewed here have shown workers' participation has suffered largely at the hands of employers who felt, and probably still feel, that such a system will take away from their right to manage. Because of this attitude of employers, information sharing has been inadequate. Some studies have pointed out the role conflict that most of the representatives have faced in mixed boards and committees. The conflicts arose because very often representatives were forced to adopt the company view. Secondly, trade union organizations believe that the real purpose behind this scheme is to weaken the existence of trade unionism in industry and to enhance inter and intra-union rivalry by fragmenting the workers. Thirdly, it is not clear how far the workers are willing to participate in decision-making process. With a view to making this scheme a success, the issues explored are whether workers really want participation, and if so, in what kind of decisions and to what extent, and through which institutional forms.

Therefore, for workers' participation to become a part of the industrial culture, it is essential that attitudes of management and trade union have to change. Moreover, it is also needed that management and trade union organisations undertake on their own or in collaboration with training institution, programmes for educating workers for participation at all levels and equipping them to

share the responsibilities of joint decisions. There may be many impediments to effective implementations. How these can be avoided or reduced is to be worked out at the organizational level with the concurrence of employers, trade unions and workers.

#### *NOTES*

1. Dastur (1972) made an overview of the broad components of a participation model that could be adopted in the banking industry. Gupta (1977) pointed out the scope and practicability of participative management in the defence services. Similarly, Huss (1971) suggested participative management in hospitals. Jain (1976) emphasised the concept of common enterprise and a model of cooperative plan.
2. Jena (1959) described a model of joint management councils basing on the experiences of Britain and Canada. Narayan (1975) prescribed West German model for increasing productivity in India. Panday (1975) discussed various participative schemes in Canada.
3. Dutta (1976) stressed the importance of workers' participation schemes in India for the achievement of industrial harmony. Similarly, Sahoo (1971) analysed the part played by the government in the promotion and working of joint management councils. He also identified the reasons for its limited success and made some suggestions for the success. Sharma (1976) has described the government's two-tier participation scheme of 1975 i.e., shop councils at the shop levels and joint councils at the enterprise level with emphasis on the shop floor participation.
4. Chakraborty (1976) presented a detailed picture of labour conditions in public and private sectors in India vis-a-vis productivity. He called for workers' participation in the context of labour conditions in industries. Datar (1977) discussed about the socio- political environment in India and workers' participation in management. He emphasised the need for adequate organisational communication, education of the workers and the role of technicians in the effective

participation. Rath and Murthy (1975) mentioned about the structural defects in the industrial relations set-up. Sheth (1972) identified the conditions necessary for the successful working of joint management councils and suggested a re-examination in the context of social reality and the experience gained so far.

5. Vikram (1975) criticized the attitudes of management in public enterprises towards workers' participation in management. Zahir (1977) called the managers to change their attitude from elitism to social consciousness and to adopt an attitude of two-way cooperation in order to make effective participative management in industries.
6. Ayyar (1976) tried to identify the areas and levels of participation in different managerial cadres existing in two government departments : public works and public health. Bhattacharya (1976) has explained the scheme of workers' participation in the Liluah workshop of the Eastern Railways. Krishnan Nair (1970) studied the evolution of joint consultative machinery in the Indian Aluminium Company. Mankidy (1976) studied participative management in the nationalised bank. Similarly, Patil (1971) discussed the mechanics of workers' participation and the causes for its failure. Prasad (1967) described the application of joint management council in the Hindusthan Machine Tools factories and its failure. Thiagarajan (1979) too argued about workers' participation and ownership through sharholding in three sectors : public private and cooperative. Two reports of the Government of India (1959) and (1965) similarly, have evaluated the functioning of works committees and joint management councils in both public and private sectors.
7. Bhatia (1973) suggested that there should be change in the style of management, proper organisational structure, communication, etc. Meena (1973) identified the causes of the slow progress and made some suggestions for the speedy implementation. Mukherjee (1977) felt that participation will be successful only with a purposeful constructive and innovative leadership. Nair (1977) suggested the need for

suitable training and extension of education for workers in this regard. Panakel, Shaik Ali and Warrier (1977) suggested the need for research-based training programmes at all levels to advance participative management. Similarly, Viswanathan and Sridharan (1975) made some broad recommendations for implementing workers' participation programmes in the Indian environment.

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## INDIA : DIALECTICS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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The paper presents some thoughts and arguments on the application on Dialectics in social analysis. The initial thoughts develop around the following set of arguments : that Dialectics offers a scientific method to negotiate social reality ; that the fundamental methodological problem is one of harmonising the more general categories of Dialectics (like the Laws of Contradiction) with the specific components of one's development model. There is, again, a complementary argument that the category of 'social development' constitutes the guiding notion in Dialectical sociology. In the Indian perspective, as distinguished from any other, this category has so far remained recondite. It is contended that a clear explication of the category of social development directs the study of Indian social reality along the dialectical frame.

### I

A general notion of social development emerges well from the Marxist philosophy of history. Yet in India's case it is the classical Marxist formulation itself that has been initially responsible for the confusion concerning the general nature of social development in this land. The notion of 'Asiatic mode' is either too simple or too profound. Formulated as it was on the basis of inadequate facts and source materials collected by British writers and colonial officials, the concept of 'Asiatic' society would formidably inhibit the marxist scholarship in the exploration of the fundamental contradictions in the Indian Society.<sup>1</sup>

In the history of social thinking we do get other notions of evolution and development. These other notions, however, fail to

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emphasize the historicity of the social reality. Herbert Spencer, for example, writes about a general process of evolution characterising organic and superorganic life patterns. He refers to a general trend of development in both organic and superorganic (social) forms of life whereby the simpler forms give rise to the more complex forms. One may also refer to some modern political sociologists and to the so-called developmental approach presenting a notion of political development as distinguished from economic development. The politologist's notion of development is one of increasing sophistication, of the increasing articulation of political institutions and the increasing level of political participation. Thus in non-dialectical sociology the idea of development is either of 'diversification' or of 'articulation' or of mere quantitative growth. Evidently, these notions are of little use as they preclude the consideration of the myriad historical forces that unite and/or contradict, one with another, producing the complex social reality. Formal evolutionism or positivist developmentalism, keeping no truck with social history, offer models of development that do not inform practice.<sup>2</sup>

So far Historical Materialism alone has offered a full-fledged notion of development. Historical materialism, as an application of Dialectics in the study of society, offers a model of social development that is uniquely distinguished by a clear conception of human progress. As one writer aptly remarks, "The idea of 'development' in social science, meaning the progressive alteration and succession of different types of socio-economic formation over time, is firmly marxian in origin".<sup>3</sup>

In the widely known 1859 Preface Marx writes, "In broad outline we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois modes of production as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society".<sup>4</sup> It will be misjudging or rather deliberately maligning Marx if one reads in the above lines any notion of determinism or of historical inevitability. In the first place, Marx has designated the forms, as he himself says, only in broad outline. Secondly, he does not offer any unilinear model of development. The pre-capitalist formations, for example, do not succeed each other in any uniform pattern everywhere. The Asiatic form, in particular, illustrates the flexibility of the Marxist model.<sup>5</sup>

For an understanding of the Indian Society Marx has the Asiatic mode to offer. As we have noted earlier, this notion of Asiatic society has not been happily used by our historians. The scope of this paper, however, allows only a very brief description of this concept. Well, the Asiatic mode of development is in essence a mode of 'least' development. The Asiatic society of India is that of a traditional, static, village-India remaining so till the advent of the British Raj. And such a view of India is not favourably treated by modern social historians.

Marx's Asiatic society is a peasant society under a paternalistic centralized administration — the so-called oriental despotism. While it is not a primitive society, nor would Marx find any significant process of class formation of antagonistic lines in such a society. There is no landed property, no potential class struggle, to motivate radical social change. There is no significant division of labour. The despotic administration would extract surplus in the form of rents/taxes. In its turn it would look after the huge water-works needed for agriculture. Such 'hydraulic' societies as they might be called would in the main survive in the form of self-sustaining village units.

The hurried description given above surely does not do the justice that Marx's notion deserves. This is especially unjust when one notes that far from keeping any dogmatic position Marx would make certain revisions to his initial conception of the Asiatic society. The initial formulation is best summarised in the very first line of Engels' letter to Marx on June 6, 1853, that : "... The absence of property in land is indeed the key to the whole of the East". Marx's articles on British India and Marx-Engels correspondence in the early 1850's will support this statement. However, following the suggestion of Prof. Hobsbawm<sup>6</sup> we find that in the 'Grundrisse' Marx has significantly revised his earlier position with more brilliant and profound formulations such as follows : "Amidst oriental despotism and the property-lessness which seems legally to exist there. ...communal property exists in fact as the foundation, created mostly by a combination of manufactures and agriculture within the small commune, which thus becomes altogether self-sustaining, and contains all the conditions of reproduction and surplus production within itself" .

Of course, even the (revised) notion of communal property does not earn the Palm from our historians.

Marx expected that despite all its colonial predatory motives, the British could break the Asiatic mode and thereby create the foundation of capitalism. He, however, could not work out in detail the nature of such capitalism as initiated by external forces.

There is another model of social development, that accounts for colonial impact and later situation, in the name of "Capitalist Underdevelopment". Also known as the "metropole-periphery" model, this notion conceives of a dialectical unity between the development of the development and the development of the underdevelopment. Thus social development in a country like India is conceived as the development of underdevelopment. And this is capitalist underdevelopment. That is, under the British Raj India enters the era of capitalism, though of an underdeveloped variety. As Andre Gunder Frank, the main author of this model, writes : "Underdevelopment results fundamentally from the intrusion of the capitalist system" or that "...underdevelopment is systematically and everywhere associated with—in fact caused by—colonization"<sup>8</sup>. Thus a colonial capitalist mode is essentially a mode to subsidise the colonialist and the imperialist. Accordingly, the social development in such a country like India would always remain on a low-key — the underdevelopment of India being maintained as a necessary condition for the development of the developed countries of the West. The implication of a universal, absolute drain of surplus in this 'underdevelopment' thesis will obviously remain a point of debate.

## II

Modern historians and sociologists are increasingly speaking of a complex feudal mode of development in India till the coming of the Mughals or even till the end of the Mughals. They also talk about the potentialities of capitalist development in the pre-British period. This is, again, supplemented by some economic historians by a thesis of de-industrialisation, of the systematic destruction of India's industrial potentialities by the British colonialists.

Sociologists like Bhupendranath Dutta or historians like R. S. Sharma would find a clear phase of feudalism with almost all the

main components of western feudalism during the period from the rise of the Imperial Guptas to the days of the Delhi Sultanate or to the still further period including the Mughals<sup>9</sup>. Some like Irfan Habib would evade the problem of categorization by coining a general term, 'Indian medieval economy', to designate the same period. Still others like Harbans Mukhia would neither commend the Asiatic mode nor would find any feudal mode<sup>10</sup>. One may explain the irritating variety that is India, with her complex social formations, in terms of a wide variety of modes of production to be found in different parts of the country with different degrees of stability at different times.

Even for modern India, the student of social development may like to share this last view as he finds bonded labour, jajmani system, the landlords and the Rajas (though emaciated) along with the Tatas, the Birlas and the multinationals — all as parts of the Indian social reality. The immense variety of our social, economic and cultural scene is, perhaps explained realistically in terms of a peculiar combination of various modes of production. It may be noted that this apparently more convincing position was first developed by one of India's great historians, Prof. D. D. Kosambi.<sup>11</sup>

According to Kosambi, Indian history does not fit precisely into any rigid framework of either the PSFC or the Asiatic model. As he writes : "...not all parts of the country were simultaneously in the same stage. At every stage, in almost every part of the country, a great deal of the superstructure survived, along with the productive and formal mechanism of several previous stages ; there always remained some people who could and did cling stubbornly to the older mode"<sup>12</sup>. However, Kosambi would hasten to add : "We need to concentrate only upon each particular mode as it became dominant to the extent that it was bound to prevail over most of the country"<sup>13</sup>.

Taking the cue from Kosambi, the present writer would like to emphasize the concept of the dominant mode in appreciating the nature of social development in India. It is contended that while there is no single mode of production prevailing even to-day over the whole of Indian society, not all the various modes operate with equal

vigour or facility. At a particular historical period (over most of the areas) one particular mode appears the more dominating. Thus it was basically a feudal mode that dominated most of the Indian society for a long time in the pre-British period. Similarly, in the modern era, even though the bourgeois mode of production would develop in the main, as a forced extraneous growth, it is this bourgeois mode (with all its imperfections) that shapes the fundamental character of the present-day Indian society.

### III

We have made a rapid survey of a very interesting literature on the subject. We have taken the risk of being superficial in our account not only because we are not writing history but because we like to highlight the following things : (a) that for the Indian society a concept of development cannot be worked out according to any existing model ; (b) that the notion of a *dominant mode* can be the starting point in our social analysis ; and (c) that the sociologist may inform himself, even through secondary sources (the historical works), about the dominant mode of socio-economic development that has historically evolved in his area of research.

It is the last point suggested above that distinguishes the dialectical from a non-dialectical social science. For the so-called structuralist or structural-functionalist the primary task might be, for example, to determine the *dominant caste* or the *caste elites* and proceed accordingly to analyse the rural society of India. For the dialectician, the primary task is that of knowing the dominant mode of production in the area or setting of his research. The problem of dominant or depressed castes/classes becomes less difficult to pursue once the dominant mode of production is known.

A question may be raised at this point of our discussion, as to what constitutes the dominant mode ? How to assess, again, the nature of social development in terms of a mode of production ? Well, the general Marxist concept of the mode of production is too well known to need any elaboration. There are two aspects of a mode of production : (a) the relations of production that refer to the whole complex of social relations as guided, in the main, by the nature of ownership of the means of production and the instruments

of distribution in the society ; (b) the forces of production that refer to human labour power as aided or regulated by the level of technology, human knowledge and the myriad customs and folkways.

The dynamism of a mode of production is determined by the inherent contradiction between the relations and the forces of production. While the social relations of production have the inherent penchant for achieving a stable pattern, the social forces of production are characterised by their inherent mobility. Hence the contradiction, the acute sharpening of the contradiction (in the form of class struggles) preparing the ground for a radical change in the social formation that would usher in a new stage of social development. In fact, it is the development of the forces of production as motivated by man's unending battle with nature that constitutes the root cause of all social development.

To find out the dominant mode at a particular time and place we thus need to understand the nature of development of the forces of production, in the main. It is suggested here that the study of the labour process, of the actual working of the basic forces of production, will provide the necessary knowledge. The form of the use and exploitation of labour reveals the dominant mode and the consequent stage of social development. The life style and the life process of the basic producer (i.e. labour) stand in a relation interdependence with the process of using labour power. Accordingly we get the following main systems :

(i) When the production system directly controls both the life process and the actual labour/work process, a system of slavery or bonded labour emerges ;

(ii) When in the system there is a direct control of the life process and hence an indirect, though no less severe, control over the actual labour process (through such institutions like the jajmani system or the central bureaucratic apparatus) a system of feudalism emerges ;

(iii) When, again, the direct control of the labour-power leads to an indirect control over the life of labour we find the system of capitalism. The theoretically 'free-labour' turns into wage-slave in the system of capitalism.

The task of identifying the stage of social development, we believe, becomes easier following the categorization made above. In India, we may say, depending on the known historical evidences as to the nature of process/work process of labour, a feudal mode dominated during the period known as medieval India. This for a long time the life process of the Indian peasant was under severe social control as determined by the Brahmins, the overlords and the centralized bureaucratic apparatus. And this would indirectly also control his work-process, making a veritable serf in him.

In modern India the dominant pattern is getting the other way round. The actual production activity is now being increasingly brought under direct control. Even though the Indian bourgeoisie does not have any record of democratic revolution, the social system to-day is, in essence, based on the capitalist labour process. A new written constitution for the country no doubt allows the Indian people to contribute their labour-power on their own accord ; in reality the average Indian has no other alternative but to offer himself as a commodity—in fact as the most important commodity—to the owners who own everything except this basic force of production. The dominant capitalist mode happily combines with the weakening landlordism (or even with a system of bonded labour or tribal order) to extract surplus directly despite all the constitutional provisions against exploitation or the directive principle for fair wage. Indirectly the life process of the millions get controlled. However, owing to the absence of any significant democratic revolution, the dominant social relations do not reveal the degree of sophistication attained by the western bourgeois societies long ago. Thus a peculiar contradiction works between the dominant, capitalist, economic mode that is expanding on the one hand and the wide variety of caste, tribal, religious, parochial and such other pre-capitalist social forces operating at various levels on the other. The student of Indian sociology must take cognizance of this *unique contradiction* at its elemental level to avoid a pointless research.

#### IV

The construction of a dialectical model for Indian society begins with the recognition of the *unique contradiction* we have just noted. Accordingly, this model notes a variety of 'life processes as also the

unevenness of 'work process-life process' relations operating in different parts of the land. At the same time, it is noted that this unique contradiction and the continuing variety of work process and life styles would offer a wider scope for the use of such important concepts like alienation in the Indian scene. Prof. Srinivas's famous bulldozer driver at Rampura village performing black magic during the leisure-time might be one case in point<sup>14</sup>. We consider this hiatus between work and life as a manifestation of an Indian form of alienation. Of course, Srinivas could not view it that way, considering the case as a mere gap in Westernization.

We may refer to one or two important fields of sociological research in India to unfold our model. The study of the caste system or studies in the rural social structure may be taken as examples. Here our model suggests that the *initial determination of the dominant mode* of production activity will allow one appreciate the progressive dissolution of community solidarity in rural India or the development of social inequality on class lines rather than on caste lines.

Generally speaking, dialectics of social development refers to the development of different form of class struggles and social contradictions. A dialectical approach may thus also be conceived as a class approach to social analysis. It will, however, be simplistic, nay, it will be a gross misapplication of dialectics, if the study of contradictions is taken to be one of discovering the bourgeois-proletariat polarity in every aspect of the Indian social reality. Not to speak of the wide variety of pre-capitalist social relations, even for the social relations characterized by the dominant mode the problem is one of pursing the process of formation of class groupings rather than of knowing the process of class struggles as such.

Formation of class groups characterizes every society, big or small, developed or underdeveloped. Social analysis is fundamentally an analysis of such class groupings. When one studies certain social structures or institutions one is expected to discover (a) how these are geared so as to sustain, facilitate or hinder a particular mode of production activity as against another, and (b) how do they extend privilege to a set of class groupings and/or produce a condition of subordination for others.

Considering the study of the caste system we may note that the phenomenon of caste cannot be anything exotic in the dialectical model. Caste was in a sense, class for the Indian social complex. A growth of the dominant bourgeois mode would mean the decadence of casteism in its essence. Kosambi nicely says, caste is class on a primitive level of production<sup>15</sup>. Where the higher levels of production develop, the *casteized class* get replaced by the purer forms of class. The caste forms of social strata may struggle for their survival where the dominant mode is yet to be extended in full swing. The caste system cannot exist with an established capitalist system. For, as Pavlov rightly points out, the system of caste institutions essentially "exhibits features of tribal cohesion, slavish humility, and guild and social estate organisation"<sup>16</sup>.

As we expect the development of the dominant bourgeois mode we need not thereby simplify the caste question into a simple model, of Brahmins (in alliance with other upper castes) exploiting the lower castes and the Harijans. It is no doubt true that the vicious struggles that we find to-day between the forwards and the backwards or the reservationists and the anti-reservationists appear almost in the form of class wars. But then, these are actually the evil manifestations of the unique contradiction we have mentioned earlier ; these are not the struggles that develop around the actual production activity. These are not class struggles.

We may note here the important fact pointed out by many, and in fact known to any average Indian, that there is no identity between caste hierarchy and agrarian hierarchy even though the position was more *harmonic* (to use Beteille's term)<sup>17</sup> in the earlier times. We argue that today this absence of correspondence between one's caste position and one's economic position would only highlight the growth of the dominant bourgeois mode and the development of the class system that characterize a modern social system. A dialectical model thus relates the category of caste with the category of class with reference to the inherent dynamism of the mode of production. The term class has no doubt an objective socio-economic indicator. But the term is better viewed dialectically ; that is, an objective consideration of human groupings on the basis of production activity should be combined with the subjective attitude formation of individuals to arrive at a correct meaning of the term class. In modern India

caste groupings and caste values have this important role of contributing to the subjective attitude formation of individuals. Hitherto classes may develop along, or may cut across, caste lines. A class, says Ernst Fischer, is born in a class struggle<sup>18</sup>. This interesting statement, we think, appears most appropriate in the Indian social scenario. The various caste struggles expressing the seething discontent of the depressed people, the alignment and realignment of different communities, the tensions between the tribals and the nontribals, the contradiction between town and country, the clash of ideologies etc. etc.—all these apparently anarchic form of social convulsions have, in effect, a noticeable tendency to create the purer types of class groupings. These social conflicts and the complementary processes of class formation at different levels constitute the prime concern of dialectical sociology.

Sociology in India today is replete with a host of relatively neutral notions such as Sanskritization, Secularization, Westernization, Modernization and so on. Dialectical sociology finds relevance in all such notions if only they are understood as so many forms of *Rationalization* of human social relations, rationalizations that would either restrain or exacerbate social struggles in general and the class conflicts in particular. The working of the cultural, religious and other forms and institutions may similarly be understood as indicative of the interconnections between the conflicting aspects of the social reality.

We may now reproduce the substance, so to say, of dialectical sociology in the following lines :

- (i) Classification of the *social storm-centres* with reference to the *dominant mode* of production ;
- (ii) Clarification of the popular notions of social conflict to be made in terms of class contradictions ;
- (iii) Evaluation of the social norms and institutions, that is studying their performance in terms of the dominant ideas representing the *dominant mode* ;
- (iv) Explanation of social behaviour with reference to the *unique contradiction* that we have noted earlier.

This substance, again, indicates the methodological model. For, as we know, dialectics is both a theory and a method. Hitherto,

collection of data remains well controlled as theory would inform practice. Again, concrete analysis of the data may introduce necessary modifications in the specific formulations of the general theory. This 'fact-and-theory' dialectic further upholds the scientific character of our methodological model. Following Thomas Kuhn's<sup>19</sup> initial conception of scientific revolution and dominant theory we can claim for dialectics the status of the '*ruling paradigm*' in social sciences. Non-dialectical *academic sociology*, with all its sophisticated concepts, has no comparable sort of general theory to provide answers to the main problems of social development. Unable to replace conventional theory in any real sense, in the sense dialectics is capable of, modern sociology stoops to pointless empiricism, to *data-fetishism* as one may call it.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

(This is the preparatory outline of a dialectical model that may facilitate scientific sociological inquiry in India. A valuable suggestion offered by Prof. Gautam Bhadra is hereby acknowledged. The author is also indebted to Dr. Barun De and Prof. Anjan Ghosh for some valuable comments they have offered on an earlier draft ).

1. Eric J. Hobsbawm refers to the different sources from which Marx and Engels derived their knowledge of India. See Hobsbawm's introduction to "Karl Marx : Pre-capitalist economic formations", (International Publishers, N. Y. 1965), pp. 21-22.
2. Spencer conceived development as an automatic process ; his organic analogy is mechanical ; his hypothesis of evolution appears wild as he makes identical the evolution of the universe, of the solar system, of societies and of man'. See J. Rumney, "Herbert Spencer's Sociology", (Williams and Norgate, London, 1934). see especially ch. IX.
3. Aidan Foster-Carter, "Neo-Marxist approaches to development and underdevelopment" in Emanuel de Kadt and Gavin Williams (Ed), 'Sociology and Development' (Tavistock Publications, London, 1974), P. 69.
4. The Preface to "A contribution to the critique of political economy".
5. The statement quoted from the 'preface' does not, therefore, imply a simple view of chronological succession or historical progress ; it rather emphasizes that "each of these systems is in crucial respects further removed from the primitive state of man".  
see Hobsbawm, *op. cit.* pp. 36-38.

6. *Ibid.* p. 33.
7. Karl Marx—‘Grundrisse’ (The Pelican Marx Library), translated by Martin Nicolaus ; Penguin, 1973, p. 473.
8. Andre Gunder Frank—‘On Capitalist Underdevelopment’. (OUP, 1975), pp. 1-3.
9. (a) R. S. Sharma—‘Indian Feudalism : c. 300-1200’ (University of Calcutta, 1965).  
(b) B. N. Dutta—‘Studies in Indian social polity’ (Calcutta, 1944). ch. XV.
10. Harbans Mukhia—‘was there Feudalism in Indian History?’ (Indian history Congress Presidential Address, sec. III, 1979). See also Amritava Banerjee, “B. N. Dutta—Dialectical approach in social and political studies” (*Socialist Perspective*, March 1981).
11. D. D. Kosambi—‘The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline’ (Vikas, 1970).
12. *Ibid.* p. 23.
13. Loc. cit.
14. M. N. Srinivas—‘Social change in modern India’ (Orient Longman, 1972) ; p. 54.
15. D. D. Kosambi—*op. cit.* p. 50.
16. V. Pavlov et. al. ‘India : Social and Economic Development’, 18th and 20th centuries. (Progress, Moscow, 1975), p. 14.
17. Andre Beteille—‘Studies in Agrarian social structure’; (OUP, 1974), ch. 8. Also his booklet ‘Inequality and social change’ (OUP, 1972), p. 25.
18. Ernst Fischer—‘Marx in his own words’, (Penguin, 1970), p. 73.
19. T. S. Kuhn—‘The Structure of Scientific Revolution’, 2nd ed. (Chicago, The University Press, 1970)  
Prof.- V. L. Allen rightly points out that in this enlarged edition Kuhn makes a retreat to a conformist position by minimising the significance of ‘paradigmatic shift’ or the need of ‘theory displacement’.   
see V. L. Allen—‘Social Analysis : Marxist critique and alternative’ (Longman, London & N. Y, 1975), pp. 38-41. (For our purpose, however, we keep to the initial formulation of ‘dominant paradigm’ as made by Kuhn in his first edition in 1962).